

Winter and its associated driving conditions came early to parts of the country this year. However, roads and walkways can become slippery with ice, snow, rain or even heavy dew. So, regardless of where you are on the national map, please make sure your drivers take these precautions when walking, driving, and assisting passengers in slippery conditions.

Footing Traction

Improve footing traction by wearing boots or overshoes. Avoid smooth surfaced or plastic soled shoes.

Allow extra time to get to where you are going. Take short steps. Research indicates that pointing the feet slightly outward improves stability and will help you keep your center of balance.

Avoid uneven surfaces and curbs covered with ice.

Exit the vehicle carefully. Swing both legs around and place both feet on the ground before you attempt to stand. Gain your balance before standing and reach only within your center of balance to get assistance from the door.

Always use sidewalks and cleared paths, shortcuts may cause a fall in the long run.

Avoid walking between parked cars.

Use extreme care when stepping up or down curbs or stairs. Keep in mind, a grassy hill can be just as slippery as snowy steps.

Safe Passenger Assistance

Along with keeping drivers safe and injury free, passenger safety is of utmost importance. Always adhere to MTM's Transportation Provider Guidelines. Make sure your drivers know their responsibilities.

Passengers must use seat belts properly. As needed, drivers must assist the passenger with securing the seat belt. If a passenger refuses to comply with this requirement, the driver must stop travel until the seat belt is properly in place.

Drivers must open and close vehicle doors for passengers entering or exiting the vehicle. Unless the trip is only for curb-to-curb service, the driver must provide safe assistance (if needed) to or from the main door or reception area of the destination.

Passengers who, under clear weather conditions do not need help, may need assistance under slippery weather conditions. Drivers should always play it safe, assist the passenger, taking note of the measures listed above about safe footing traction.

For safe curb-to-curb service, drivers must ensure that the passenger enters and exits the vehicle in an unobstructed and safe area. Remember: avoid uneven surfaces and curbs covered with ice.

Vehicle Traction Facts

A vehicle may only have 10% to 20% traction on snow-covered roads compared to a dry road surface. Reduced traction can limit the driver's ability to maneuver the vehicle properly

whether accelerating, braking, or steering. Therefore, reduced traction requires reduced speed. Always maintain a safe speed for road and weather conditions. Loss of traction will happen at a much lower speed in snow versus a dry road surface.

Vehicle Supplies

The motto, "Be Prepared," is not just for Boy Scouts. MTM's Transportation Provider Guidelines require all vehicles to have (among other items) a first aid kit, spill kit, three reflective triangles and an approved accident /incident form. A pre-trip inspection should confirm that the vehicle has the required equipment. Also, ensure that all drivers have completed required training including first aid and accident procedures.

Accidents Happen

In the event that you have an accident or vehicle break down, you must notify MTM immediately if the incident will cause the passenger to be 15 minutes or more late for his/her appointment. In addition, make alternate plans to complete the trip in a timely manner and ensure the passenger makes his/her appointment.

Communicate, communicate, communicate

Exercise good judgment when weighing the decision to complete a trip during inclement weather. MTM understands that transportation providers make their best effort to complete trips especially recurring and urgent transports. However, if it is in the best interest of safety not to complete a transport due to unsafe road or travel conditions, notify MTM and the passenger immediately of the situation and decision. Open lines of communication will ensure safety and uphold quality service standards.

It is a good idea to review the MTM's Transportation Provider Guidelines and Inclement Weather Policy as a refresher course. Passenger safety is a major focus all year round and slippery conditions require an extra measure of caution.

