

WINTER TRAVEL GUIDELINES

Winter travel by road in the Northwest Territories is a special challenge. Weather conditions, distance to roadside help, and the type of roads, all mean that extra precautions are needed.

Planning Ahead

It is important to plan ahead for a trip in winter, especially if travelling on an ice road.

- **Do not travel alone.** This may not always be possible, but it is a good idea to co-ordinate trips for best use of vehicles as well as for help in case of problems.
- **Check on weather and road conditions.** Do not travel at temperatures lower than -40°C unless it is an emergency. Do not travel on any ice road before or after the official DOT dates.
- **Ensure adequate personal clothing.** Wear layers of loose-fitting, lightweight clothing. Outerwear must include a winter parka and wind pants, winter boots and mitts.
- **Ensure adequate safety equipment.** The should include a winter survival kit, sleeping bag, first aid kit, candle, chocolate bar, and food.
- **Ensure adequate communications.** A mobile radio or satellite phone should be available depending on the distance and area of the journey.
- **Before the trip, do a vehicle check.** Arrangements for a “road check” can be made with the local PWS maintenance contractor. Review the vehicle checklist. In any case, be sure there is a shovel, a wheel wrench, a jack, and a spare tire that is ready to use.
- **Check equipment.** Make sure the required vehicle and personal equipment is available for a winter emergency. The employee should check with his/her supervisor for the list that applies to the employee’s region.
- **Speak to supervisor.** The employee should ask his/her supervisor about any specific instructions needed before the trip. For example, the employee should know who to call upon arrival at the destination.



Call In – Before and After

To avoid being stranded on the road and to make sure a search will be carried out, follow the call In procedure:

- Before departing, the employee should call in with the departure time, destination and expected arrival time. The employee should check with his/her supervisor for the proper number.
- Upon arrival, call in again. If it is after working hours, the number to call may be different.
- If no call is received by one hour after the employee's estimated arrival time, a search process will be started. It is very important to remember to call in upon arrival.
- Allow extra time for driving in winter and icy conditions.
- Follow the procedure on both legs of the trip – going and returning.
- Follow Energy conservation Guidelines, including those for winter driving.

Workshops

There may be vehicle-handling courses offered in the employee's region, as well as survival training. The employee should ask his/her supervisor about courses to improve driving and survival skills.