

GOVERNMENT VEHICLE USE

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.

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.