

Start every trip with a clear view

When in a hurry we often forget to properly prepare before heading down the road in our cars or trucks. Buckling the seat belt, adjusting the mirror and setting up your favorite music to play are typical last minute activities that some of us don't always finish before the car is in gear. This is a bad habit anytime of the year, but during the winter months when roads are slick it can be extra dangerous.

Another last minute, cold-weather task we may forget, especially if our vehicles have been sitting outside all night, is making sure the windows are free of frost and fog on the inside, and snow and ice are cleared off windows, headlights, hood, roof and trunk on the outside. You can't safely drive if windshields are not completely clear inside and out, or the lights are covered. Snow on the hood,



roof and truck may not seem like a hazard, but once you're moving it can blow onto your windshield or in front of other vehicles.

Serious crashes can and do occur due to poor window visibility. Between 2014 and 2018 there were a 85 crashes in Oregon where the windshield view was listed as "obstructed." These crashes resulted in 82

people being injured and 2 deaths.

In most cases, if you start your car and let the defroster and heater run for five or ten minutes, you'll be rewarded with a warm vehicle and snow and ice melted from the windshield. Don't run a vehicle inside an enclosed space and make sure the exhaust pipe is not plugged. Always check your operator's manual for best practices for your vehicle.

It only takes a short time to clear your hood, roof and trunk to avoid snow blowing off your vehicle and contributing to a crash. You might also consider one of numerous products available that can cover your windshields or vehicle to ease the removal of ice and snow.

Plan extra time before EVERY TRIP and you'll be better prepared when Old Man Winter comes a calling.

Wear safety belts every trip; no excuses

Safety belts and child safety seats save lives. Oregon Department of Transportation's Safety Division offers tips for using safety belts and child safety seats properly, and explains recent changes in safety seat laws. Buckle up. No excuses - it's the Way to Go!

For more information and a link to a three-minute video explaining Oregon's safety belt and child seat laws visit <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS/safetybelts.shtml>



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