

Columbia Co. Traffic Safety Commission gives winter driving tips

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er weather conditions, the drop can be anywhere between 3° F and 6° F per 1000 ft. gained. So, if you travel into the hills, you may very well encounter ice or snow, so slow down.

7. Cold Air Sinks. Because cold air is heavier than warm air, it sinks to lower elevations. Some areas, such as the Chapman area on Scappoose-Vernonia Road, are known as cold-air sinks and such areas may even be colder than areas at higher elevations. Cold air may sit in these areas for days, allowing frost or ice to develop, and making roads slick.

8. Bridges. Bridges have no insulating material under them (soil or rock), and because of this lack of insulating material, will frost or freeze faster than main road surfaces. Slow down when approaching and crossing bridges in freezing weather.

9. De-icer. ODOT and Columbia County use a chemical de-icer (magnesium chloride) on some roads when the weather conditions are right. Once the road has been sprayed with de-icer, it can remain effective for up to 5 days.

Be aware that rain will dilute and wash the de-icer off the road, so the timing of when to apply it is critical. Also, de-icer is effective only when the temperature is within 15 degrees of 32° F. De-icer works great, but don't rely on it. The de-icer may be old or diluted, or the temperature may be too low for it to be totally effective. So, when temperatures are at or near freezing, slow down.

10. Sanding Rock. ODOT and the County use sanding rock during certain weather conditions to reduce slick and icy conditions. Sanding rock is what the County uses on most of the County roads. It is not affected by temperature or rain. However, sand can end up on the side of the road, instead of on the driving surface.

11. Snow. Road crews work very hard to keep our roads clear of snow. However, during large, long snow events, keeping the roads free of snow and ice may not be possible. The Road Department prioritizes roads that need to be cleared for emergency purposes and they typically start snow clearing at the higher elevations,

where the problems can be the greatest. As the priority roads are opened and cleared, the crews then begin working on secondary roads. During snow, use appropriate traction devices on tires, slow down, and travel when only necessary.

12. Ice. Remember, ice is extremely slick when the temperature is just a few degrees above or below freezing. Drive as described in #3. Metal studs or chains/cables on vehicle

tires may help, but even they cannot be counted on. When the roads are iced over, travel only when necessary.

13. Mud on the Road. Many off road activities can cause mud to be tracked onto a road's surface. If the moisture content is just right, mud can be extremely slick, so slow down when encountering mud.

14. Distracted Driving. One last thing, using your cell phone and/or sending a text message

is extremely dangerous in normal driving conditions, in addition to being illegal. Don't do it. If you need to make a phone call or send a text message, be safe, pull off the road if the call or text message can't wait until you reach a safe place or your destination.

The Columbia County Traffic Safety Commission wishes all Columbia County residents a safe winter driving season.

Poster contest open to all in Col. Co.

The Blues Committee and United Way of Columbia County would like to invite you to participate in a contest to provide the art for the Fifth Annual Blues Benefit Festival "Rhythm on the River".

The contest is open to all Columbia County residents, and is a benefit for United Way of Columbia County.

- All entries must be original art and suitable for a family oriented event.
- All art must be a maximum of 10" wide x 9" high, and be signed and dated by the artist.
- Theme is "Rhythm on the River" (6th annual), please in-

clude theme in art.

- Artists are encouraged to include event title and location; Rhythm on the River 6th Annual Blues Benefit, Clatskanie City Park, Saturday, July 28.
- Entries must be received by March 23, by 1:00 p.m.

Send or deliver entries to: United Way of Columbia County, Attention: Blues Festival Art, P.O. Box 538, 305 W 3rd St., Rm 16, Rainier, OR 97048. Please phone ahead if you are dropping off, 503-556-3614.

- Original art may also be sent in a high quality jpg format suitable for reproduction, to uwcc@hotmail.com with Blues

Poster Contest in the subject line.

- Include contact information when submitting work.

All entries become the property of the Rhythm on the River Blues Committee and United Way. Entries will be used to raise funds. All proceeds go to United Way of Columbia County.

The Event Committee will judge the entries and the entry of the first place winner will be displayed as the 6th annual event poster. There will be a \$50 award for first place, \$25 each for second and third place.

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