

It goes without saying that when winter weather hits, there is a heightened level of safety that needs to be considered when you are behind the wheel. Here in the Midwest, weather and driving conditions can change quickly, so it is wise to be prepared for reasonable scenarios.



### **EQUIP YOUR VEHICLE**

- A flashlight with extra batteries.
- A first-aid kit with your necessary medications.
- Blankets and/or sleeping bags, extra mittens or gloves, socks, a warm cap, and rain gear.
- A small sack of sand or kitty litter to use for traction under your wheels.
- A small shovel.
- Jumper cables, as well as small tools such as pliers, adjustable wrenches, and screwdrivers.
- A brightly colored cloth to use as a flag.
- Nonperishable foods and bottled water.



### **DRIVE SAFELY**

- If possible, postpone your travel until roads have been plowed, treated, and cleared.
- Wear your seatbelt! Slow down and adjust your speed to the conditions.
- Give snowplows plenty of room and don't pass them.
- Watch for other vehicles having problems with road conditions- don't pass others on or near bridges.
- Keep mirrors, windows and lights clean; keep your lights on.
- Keep your fuel tank at least half full.
- If you don't feel comfortable driving, pull off of the highway and park at the first safe place.



### **IF YOU FIND YOURSELF IN AN ACCIDENT**

- Do not spin your wheels. This will only dig you in deeper.
- Turn your wheels from side to side a few times to push snow out of the way.
- Use a light touch on the gas, to ease your car out.
- Use a shovel to clear snow away from the wheels and the underside of the car.
- Pour sand, kitty litter, gravel, or salt in the path of the wheels, to help get traction.
- Try rocking the vehicle. (Check your owner's manual first — it can damage the transmission on some vehicles.) Shift from forward to reverse, and back again. Each time you're in gear, give a light touch on the gas until the vehicle gets going.



### **IF YOU ARE STRANDED**

- Stay in your vehicle and don't leave to search for help if in a remote area and blizzard conditions are present. You could become disoriented and lost in blowing and drifting snow.
- Display a trouble sign. Hang a brightly colored cloth on the antenna.
- Run the engine for about 10 minutes each hour. Run the heater and turn on the dome light only when the vehicle is running.
- Keep the exhaust pipe clear of snow and open a window slightly for ventilation.
- Clap your hands and move your arms and legs occasionally. Don't stay in one position for too long.
- If more than one person is in the car, take turns sleeping.
- Huddle together for warmth.
- Use newspapers, maps and even car mats for added insulation