

# WINTER SAFETY ALERT

## AWARENESS FOR BLACK ICE CONDITIONS

This alert reinforces the importance of taking proper precautions while driving and walking during the winter months when the conditions for black ice exist.

Black ice can be one of the most dangerous conditions on winter roads. It is almost invisible and can catch drivers off guard. Black ice is clear and appears black because the dark asphalt surface underneath shows through. It can form on heavily congested highways from auto emissions, but other roads are susceptible including those in shaded areas, near lakes and rivers, in tunnels and overpasses.

### *Drivers can increase safety by observing the following tips:*

- Be aware that black ice is almost invisible.
- Be especially careful on bridges, overpasses, tunnels, and in early morning when the air temperature is rising faster than the pavement temperature.
- Never brake while driving on ice. Applying pressure to your brakes while on ice will cause a vehicle to skid. Brake only during your approach.
- Keep your distance. The distance needed to stop on ice is twice as long as under normal driving circumstances. Keep at least 4-6 second cushion between you and the vehicle directly in front of you.

Black ice is neutralized with salt and sanding. However, be aware that salt loses its effectiveness at about 15 degrees and colder.

Walking to, from parking lots, and between buildings while slippery conditions exist requires special attention to avoid slipping and falling. No matter how well the removal of snow and ice from the streets and sidewalks, you can encounter some slippery surfaces when traveling. Always exit vehicles with extreme care to prevent slipping on an icy surface.

Slips, trips, and falls are the most common accidents and injuries we experience when these conditions exist. **Always wear proper footwear.**