

Fall Safety Tips

Fall is in full swing. Leaves are falling, temperatures are dropping and the days are getting shorter. While safety is important throughout the entire year, we would like to offer a few safety precautions we should take as we enter the cool autumn and winter seasons. The transition from summer to fall means many changes in road conditions. These include slick roads due to rain, slippery streets lined with wet leaves or foliage clogging drainage structures creating standing water on roadways. The amount of daylight decreases through autumn and winter, which means we will spend more time driving in the dark, this extended time of darkness in the morning and the evening makes it challenging to see pedestrians and bikers, so be especially vigilant in sharing the road during this time. While we do only one quarter of our driving at night, 50% of traffic deaths happen at night. It doesn't matter whether the road is familiar or not, driving at night is always more dangerous. Even with high-beam headlights on, visibility is limited to about 500 feet (250 feet for normal headlights) creating less time to react to something in the road, especially when driving at higher speeds.

Some things you can do to combat darkness while driving are:

- Ensure your headlights are clean and aimed correctly
- Dim your Dashboard
- Clean the windshield to eliminate streaks
- Gaze away from oncoming lights, use the edge line
- If you wear glasses ensure they are fog resistant
- Slow down to compensate for limited visibility and reduced stopping time

Evening rush hour on its own is a dangerous time to drive due to crowded roadways and drivers eager to get home after work. In the fall and winter, it is dark during rush hour, compounding an already dangerous driving situation. Some things you can do to make it home safely during rush hour are:

- Don't be an impatient driver; slow down
- Stay in your lane and beware of drivers who dart from lane to lane
- Even though the route may be familiar, don't go on autopilot; stay alert
- Don't touch your phone, eat, drink or do other things that are distracting