

Driving Safely in the Wairarapa:

PART ONE of a four-part series on safer winter driving



Here in the Wairarapa, it only takes a little bit of snow or ice to make driving conditions treacherous. With winter upon us, the NZTA has some common-sense driving techniques to help keep you and your passengers safe on the road.

NZTA's top winter driving tips for the Wairarapa:

- Know the conditions before you go. Get the latest road condition information on www.onthemove.govt.nz, www.nzta.govt.nz/traffic, by calling **0800 4 HIGHWAYS (0800 44 44 49)** or by listening to your local radio station. You can also follow NZTA on Twitter ([@NZTAWgtn](https://twitter.com/NZTAWgtn))
- If you're headed over the Rimutaka Hill, remember that the climate here can be severe, with heavy rainfall, high winds, ice and snow. Take your time, be patient and drive to the conditions.
- **Slow down.** It only takes a split second to lose control in wet or icy conditions, and keeping your speed at 10kmh below the legal limit will greatly reduce your risk of a crash.
- Black ice or frost can make for very slippery road surfaces, often in the early morning and any time the road is shaded. Watch out - particularly on the Rimutakas and Mt Bruce.
- Watch your following distance. Nose-to-tail crashes are far more common in wet weather, and stopping distances can nearly double on wet roads. Keep at least a 4 second following distance between you and the vehicle in front.
- Sunstrike is most likely to hit you at sunrise or sunset. Keep your windscreen clean - inside and out - and be ready to use your sunglasses or sun visors. If you can't see, pull over and wait till you can.
- It pays to stick out like a sore thumb in winter, so turn on your lights whenever there's heavy cloud cover, fog or rain. You'll be much more visible to other vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians - especially at intersections - and you'll probably be able to see better too.
- And finally... **always wear your seat belt.** Make sure your passengers are buckled in too.

Winter road safety competition - go to www.nzta.govt.nz/traffic/driving-safely/competition.html.

Answer the question below and be in to win one of four \$500 fuel vouchers. **This week's question:** Where can you find the latest information on road conditions?

Coming next week - how to keep your vehicle in top shape for winter driving. Answer next week's question and you'll get another entry in the draw.

For more information, or to download our *Safer Winter Driving* brochure, please visit www.nzta.govt.nz