



Safe Work Procedure (SWP) for Winter Driving — User Guide

Purpose

Motor-vehicle incidents (MVIs) are a leading cause of workplace deaths in British Columbia. Winter weather can present hazards for workers who drive for work, or as part of their work. More work-related crashes causing injuries that result in time-loss claims from work occur between October and February.

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to organizations developing SWPs for workers who drive during the B.C. winter driving season (October 1st — April 30th). Although the sample SWP is primarily designed for workplaces that use company-owned or personal passenger cars and / or light-duty trucks (see definitions on page 13) for business purposes, it can be adapted for commercial fleets that operate other vehicle types.

Process

Identifying Hazards / Contributing Crash Factors

Use Table A (on page 8) in this as starting point when identifying hazards or contributing factors to crashes. Supervisors and workers will familiarize themselves with these hazards — and control measures needed to eliminate or minimize the hazard — before the start of the winter driving season (or when needed.)

Consultation

Before implementing a SWP it is recommended that an employer consult with their workers, supervisors and safety representative (or joint health and safety committee) to identify ways to effectively develop, communicate, monitor, evaluate and update the SWP.

Administration / Distribution of SWP

Once your winter driving SWP has been developed, it should be provided to staff and other workers before the B.C. winter driving season.

This and other SWPs should be kept in a location easily accessed by employees and other workers (such as a meeting room, central office or lunch room, or on your company's intranet, if available.) In addition, this SWP should be kept in each fleet and personal vehicle driven for work purposes.

The SWP for winter driving should be jointly reviewed and signed by the employer annually or more frequently if there is:

- A change in the work environment or business processes that could adversely affect the effectiveness of [company name]'s road safety program or a worker's well-being or safety;
- A report that the procedures, policies or work environment arrangements are not working effectively;
- An MVI involving a [company name] worker or contractor.

Sample Safe Work Procedure (SWP) for Winter Driving

Document Control and Review

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Purpose

Motor-vehicle incidents (MVIs) are a leading cause of workplace deaths in British Columbia. Winter weather can present hazards for workers who drive for work, or as part of their work. More work-related crashes causing injuries that result in time-loss claims occur between October and February.

The purpose of [company name]'s SWP for winter driving is to:

- Promote practices that reduce worker exposure to winter driving hazards;
- Reduce the human and financial costs associated with MVIs;
- Ensure that [company name] meets or exceeds the minimum requirements of the *Workers Compensation Act* (the *Act*) and the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation* (the *OHSR*);
- Develop and maintain a safe work environment that assists [company name]'s workers who drive for business purposes meet their obligations under the *Motor Vehicle Act*, the *Motor Vehicle Act Regulation* and other applicable laws.

Scope / Application

This SWP applies anytime a [company name] worker is required to drive a company-owned or personal vehicle (such as a passenger car or light-duty truck) for work purposes during the B.C. winter driving season (October 1st to April 30th).

Responsibilities

(Among other duties) supervisors at [company name] will inform their workers who drive for business purposes of all known or reasonably foreseeable winter driving hazards. Supervisors are expected to conduct a job task analysis to identify seasonal driving hazards and take appropriate steps — such as instruction or training — to eliminate or minimize worker exposure to vehicle crashes and workplace injuries.

Training

[Company name] will provide workers with the information, instruction, training, and supervision necessary to ensure the health and safety of workers who drive for work purposes. (This includes company–owned or personal vehicles driven for work.)

Safe Work Procedures

Pre-Trip: Decisions Concerning Travel in Winter Conditions

Before approving any work-related driving in winter weather the supervisor should determine:

- 1) If work tasks can be accomplished through means other than driving (such as conducting business by phone, e-mail, or video conferencing); or
- 2) If work activities can be accomplished by using other means of travel (such as public transportation, where available.)

If winter weather driving is required the supervisor — with input from supervisors and workers — will:

- 1) Assess weather conditions for where company driving will occur and, where necessary, modify driving activities (such as changing driving routes, allowing for more travel time, driving during daylight hours, postponing travel during adverse winter weather.)

Pre-Trip: Worker Preparation for Winter Driving

- 1) **Plan your route** — where possible, minimize your time on streets or highways that may become dangerous during bad weather. Respect road closure signs and barriers. Allow extra time for work travel to avoid rushing.
- 2) **Working alone procedure** — follow [company name]'s procedure. Plan specific times or locations to check in. Ensure your supervisor knows your trip route and expected arrival time.
- 3) **Apparel / PPE** — wear comfortable clothing that doesn't restrict your movement while driving. In addition, bring warm clothing (winter boots, coat, gloves and hat) in case of an emergency. Ensure that you have a suitable high visibility vest that can be easily accessed from inside the vehicle.
- 4) **Communications** — follow [company name]'s policy on distracted driving. Make sure your smart phone is charged. Ensure charger cable is available. Make sure two-way radios are operational (if available.)

- 5) **Fitness / ability to drive safely**— objectively (to the best of your abilities) evaluate your personal condition. Are you:
 - Rested? (Drowsy driving reduces your attention, slows reaction time and impairs decision making.)
 - Hydrated?
 - Nourished?
 - Medically fit to drive?

Pre-Trip: Daily Assessment of Vehicle Exterior

- 1) **PPE** — wear your high visibility vest.
- 2) **Assess engine noise** — listen for unusual squeals, clicks, hisses or other sounds that may indicate the need for maintenance or repair. Disengage the engine block heater, if available.
- 3) **Snow / ice removal** — activate heating and defrost controls after starting your vehicle. Clear any snow and ice from all windows, lights, side mirrors, hood, roof and any vehicle camera systems. Be careful of postures and extended reaching that may cause a back strain — use a long-handles brush when removing snow or ice.
- 4) **Vehicle circle check** — before assessing the condition of the vehicle, make your presence known to other workers nearby through communication and the use of a suitable traffic cone. Be mindful of the presence of other vehicles or mobile equipment. Be careful of slippery surfaces that might cause you to slip and fall.

Check the condition of the following:

- Windows — undamaged and clean
- Mirrors — undamaged and as clean
- Wipers — in good working order
- Headlights / rear lights — in good working order
- Other lights (e.g., hazard lights, fog lamps) — in good working order
- License plate light — in good working order
- Bodywork — undamaged
- Winter tires — check visible damage and assess inflation
- Undercarriage — check for visible fluid leaks
- Stored materials (truck bed or trailer) — safely secured with suitable straps or netting
- Externally mounted loads — safely secured and within the ratings capabilities of external OEM or aftermarket racks
- Trailer (if applicable) — securely hitched, in good working order

Pre-Trip: *Daily* Inspection of Vehicle Interior

- 1) **Inspect** — check the condition of following:
 - Seat belts — in good working order
 - Head restraints — set correctly for driver's height
 - Interior — no loose items
 - Driver's floor — free of items / hazards
 - Dash warning lights — engine / system status good
 - Gas — with adequate reserve in case of emergency
 - Brakes — in good working order
 - Rearview and side mirrors — set correctly
 - Items — secured with suitable straps / restraint netting
 - Fire extinguisher — charged, available
 - Emergency seatbelt cutter — available, accessible
 - Flares / emergency reflective triangles — available
 - Windshield washer fluid — spare fluid available
 - Supplemental food — in case of emergency

Pre-Trip: *Weekly* Assessment of Vehicle

- 1) **Check all of the above**
- 2) **Tires** — check the air pressure (the correct pressure is listed on a decal located in the driver's side door jamb) and tread depth (3.5mm minimum) on all tires.
- 3) **Vehicle jack** — check for the availability of a vehicle jack and the inflation level of the spare tire, if available.
- 4) **Windshield washer reservoir** — fill reservoir with cold-rated (e.g. — 45°) windshield washer fluid.
- 5) **Winter survival kit** — Recommended items include:
 - Emergency kit containing non-perishable food, one blanket and first aid kit for the driver and each passenger
 - Windshield scraper and snow brush
 - Extra windshield washer fluid
 - Spare tire, wheel wrench and jack
 - Shovel and traction mat, sand or kitty litter
 - Fuel-line antifreeze
 - Flares and matches or lighter
 - Tire chains and gloves
 - Flashlight and extra batteries
 - Battery jumper cables

Drive For the Conditions

- 1) **Look ahead** — scan the road ahead for hazards. Look ahead the vehicle in front of you for changes in the traffic pattern and be ready to respond. Drivers tend to steer where their eyes are directed so keep your eyes focused in the direction you want to travel. Eliminate or minimize any distractions that may occupy your attention.

- 2) **Speed** — reduce your speed (depending on the weather conditions) to below the posted maximum speed limit.
- 3) **Space** — increase the space between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you. On the highway, leave at least a four second space between your car and the vehicle in front of you.
- 4) **Road surface** — reduce speed when approaching icy areas such as shaded areas, bridges and overpasses.
- 5) **Vehicle control** — steer gradually to avoid a skid. Accelerate gently, turn slowly, and brake carefully and early. Avoid quick movements that could put you in a spin. Anticipate turns, stops, and lane changes well before they occur.
- 6) **Visibility** — it's critical for drivers to be seen in low light conditions, and when blowing snow impairs visibility. Always drive with your headlights on.
- 7) **Emergency and highway maintenance vehicles** — be cautious when approaching emergency vehicles, snow plows highway maintenance vehicles and other vehicles at the side of the road. Maintain a safe following distance or slow down and move over
- 8) **Emergency vehicles** — drivers must slow down and (if safe to do so) move over when approaching a stopped emergency vehicle, from either direction, when it has its lights flashing. Drivers must slow their speed to 70km/h when in an 80km/h or over zone and 40km/h when in an under 80km/h zone.

Post-Driving Activities

- 1) **Documentation** — create a daily entry in the mileage and vehicle condition logbook.
- 2) **Reporting** — advise your supervisor of any unique road hazards.

Emergency Procedures

If you become stuck or stranded, follow company procedures. Stay with your vehicle, if safe to do so. If it's an emergency, call 9-1-1.

If you are involved in a crash

- 1) Turn off your vehicle.
- 2) Check if you or your passengers are injured; call 9-1-1 if required; provide any necessary first aid, if trained.
- 3) Crashes can be traumatic – consider your emotional state (and that of your passengers) before exiting your vehicle.

- 4) If involved in a multi-vehicle crash, consider the emotional state of the other driver and their passengers.

Assess Immediate Hazards

- 1) Always assess traffic hazards before exiting your vehicle. Take steps to be seen — wear suitable high-visibility apparel (such as a vest or jacket) when near traffic or mobile equipment.
- 2) Depending on the severity of the crash, fuel lines may have been damaged; if you see or smell fuel, immediately get yourself and your passengers to safety.
- 3) Beware of fallen electrical lines if a power pole has been struck; stay inside your vehicle and / or drive to safe location, if possible.
- 4) Move your vehicle to the side of the road, if damage is minimal.
- 5) Never walk onto the roadway to inspect damage; other drivers may be too focused on the crash to notice you or they may inadvertently steer too close.

Table A	
Hazards / Contributing Crash Factors	Control Measures / Actions
Underperforming Workplace Safety Culture	
<i>Safety improvements are not valued at workplace.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Administrative / organizational processes that support safe work behaviours</i> • <i>Improved management commitment to worker safety and company safety performance</i>
<i>Safety is not considered as important as productivity / deadline pressures.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Administrative / organizational processes that support safe work behaviours</i> • <i>Improved management commitment to worker safety and company safety performance</i> • <i>Management compliance with WCA and OHSR</i>
<i>Workers and supervisors do not have the information to work safely.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Administrative / organizational processes that support safe work behaviours</i> • <i>Improved management commitment to worker safety and company safety performance</i> • <i>Management compliance with WCA and OHSR</i>
<i>Employees are not involved in decisions concerning health and safety.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Administrative / organizational processes that support safe work behaviours</i> • <i>Improved management commitment to worker safety and company safety performance</i> • <i>Management compliance with WCA and OHSR</i>
<i>Those in charge of safety do not have authority to make changes.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Administrative / organizational processes that support safe work behaviours</i> • <i>Improved management commitment to worker safety and company safety performance</i> • <i>Management compliance with WCA and OHSR</i>

<p><i>Safety activities do not receive positive recognition.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Administrative / organizational processes that support safe work behaviours</i> • <i>Improved management commitment to worker safety and company safety performance</i> • <i>Management compliance with WCA and OHSR</i>
<p><i>Workers do not have the training and / or tools to work safely.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Administrative / organizational processes that support safe work behaviours</i> • <i>Management compliance with WCA and OHSR</i>
<p><i>Driving safety is not considered a workplace health and safety issue.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Management compliance with WCA and OHSR</i> • <i>Improved management commitment to worker safety and company safety performance</i>
<p>Driver Fitness</p>	
<p><i>Fatigue (such short term or chronic fatigue, or the impact of shift work.)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Development of and compliance with fatigue and / or driver safety management policy and associated SWP</i> • <i>Compliance with WCA and OHSR</i>
<p><i>Alcohol / illegal drug impairment that affects cognitive and physical performance.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Development of and compliance with substance management and / or driver safety policy and SWP</i> • <i>Compliance with WCA and OHSR</i>
<p><i>Medical impairment, such as known or undiagnosed health condition that affects ability to drive safely; use of medication impairing judgement / reaction time.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Development of and compliance with substance management and / or driver safety policy and SWP</i> • <i>Compliance with WCA and OHSR</i> • <i>Management commitment to worker health and wellness activities.</i>
<p><i>Poor dietary habits that impairs cognitive and physical performance</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Development of and compliance with driver safety policy and SWPs.</i> • <i>Management commitment to worker health and wellness activities.</i>

Driving attitudes, behaviours, abilities	
Attitudes about personal safety, such as maintaining a belief that you are not at risk of being involved in a work-related MVI.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring practices that identify high-risk drivers • Administrative / organizational processes that support safe work behaviours • Worker training, education and supervision • Management compliance with WCA and OHSR • Worker compliance with SWPs, company policies, the MVA and other statutes
Errors in judgement, such as driving too fast for winter weather conditions or interpretation errors with highway or work-zone signage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring practices that identify high-risk drivers • Administrative / organizational processes that support safe work behaviours • Worker training, education and supervision • Worker compliance with SWPs, company policies, the MVA and other statutes
High-risk driving behaviour, such as speeding, distraction or impairment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring practices that identify high-risk drivers • Administrative / organizational processes that support safe work behaviours • Worker training, education and supervision • Worker compliance with SWPs, company policies, the MVA and other statutes
Disregarding company safety policies, applicable workplace safety regulations or motor vehicle laws.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring practices that identify high-risk drivers • Worker training, education and supervision • Worker compliance with SWPs, company policies, the MVA and other statutes
Perception about driving abilities, such as a belief about one's ability to safely regain control of a skidding vehicle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring practices that identify high-risk drivers • Worker training, education and supervision
Errors in vehicle space management, such as driving to close the vehicle in front.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring practices that identify high-risk drivers • Worker training, education and supervision • Worker compliance with SWPs, company policies, the MVA and other statutes
Other Drivers	
Other drivers following too closely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel avoidance or postponement • Minimizing your driving time • Worker training, education and supervision
Other drivers engaging in high-risk driving behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel avoidance or postponement • Minimizing your driving time • Worker training, education and supervision

<i>Driving judgement errors in driving errors made by other drivers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Travel avoidance or postponement</i> • <i>Minimizing your driving time</i> • <i>Worker training, education and supervision</i>
<i>Loss of vehicle control by another driver</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Travel avoidance or postponement</i> • <i>Minimizing your driving time</i> • <i>Worker training, education and supervision</i>
<i>Drivers who do not reduce their speed in the presence of workers, drivers or pedestrians on the side of the road.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Travel avoidance or postponement</i> • <i>Minimizing your driving time</i> • <i>Worker training, education and supervision</i>
Condition of fleet or personal vehicle	
<i>Improperly equipped vehicles, such as cars or light-duty trucks performing work duties for which they were not intended (such as transporting oversized or unsecured cargo) or vehicles driven without winter tires and emergency equipment.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Improved vehicle selection and procurement</i> • <i>Administrative / organizational processes that support safe work behaviours</i> • <i>Management compliance with WCA, OHSR and other statutes</i>
<i>Poorly maintained vehicles (increasing the risk of a mechanical breakdown.)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Adherence to vehicle manufacturers' maintenance schedule</i> • <i>Administrative / organizational processes that support safe vehicle maintenance and repair</i> • <i>Management compliance with WCA, OHSR and other statutes</i>
<i>Snow covered vehicles, which may compromise driver visibility.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Administrative / organizational processes that support safe work behaviours</i> • <i>Worker compliance with SWPs, companies policies, the MVA and other statutes</i>

Environmental Conditions	
<p><i>Winter weather that includes, but is not limited to, seasonal cold (7° to 1° degree Celsius), freezing or below freezing temperatures, significant rain events or precipitation, snow, black ice, fog, reduced daylight and avalanches.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Travel avoidance or postponement</i> • <i>Minimizing your driving time</i> • <i>Administrative / organizational processes that support safe work behaviours</i> • <i>Worker training, education and supervision</i> • <i>Worker compliance with SWPs, company policies, the MVA and other statutes</i>
<p><i>Road conditions that include, but are not limited to, rain or snow covered roads, black ice, rutted snow, potholes.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Travel avoidance or postponement</i> • <i>Minimizing your driving time</i> • <i>Administrative / organizational processes that support safe work behaviours</i> • <i>Worker training, education and supervision</i> • <i>Worker compliance with SWPs, company policies, the MVA and other statutes</i>
<p><i>Reduced visibility, such as glare; reduced daylight hours.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Travel avoidance or postponement</i> • <i>Minimizing your driving time</i> • <i>Administrative / organizational processes that support safe work behaviours</i> • <i>Worker training, education and supervision</i>
Workers at the road side	
<p><i>Roadside work zones, which include, but are not limited to, road and highway maintenance and construction crews, truck drivers, municipal workers, utility workers and emergency responders.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Travel avoidance or postponement</i> • <i>Minimizing your driving time</i> • <i>Administrative / organizational processes that support safe work behaviours</i> • <i>Driver training, education and supervision</i>
Pedestrians	
<p><i>Pedestrians are at greater risk of being struck by a vehicle during winter weather; other vehicles yielding for a pedestrian may stop abruptly in front of you.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Travel avoidance or postponement</i> • <i>Minimizing your driving time</i> • <i>Administrative / organizational processes that support safe work behaviours</i> • <i>Driver training, education and supervision</i>

Definitions*

Employer

Any person who has one or more persons working for them, through either a hiring contract or an apprenticeship contract. In some businesses, the employer may be management and / or the owner. In addition, this definition includes elected or appointed members of a board who jointly oversee the activities of a company or organization and corporate officers (such as a chief executive officer, chief operating officer and chief financial officer) of a company or organization.

Supervisor

Any person who instructs, directs and controls workers in the performance of their duties. In some businesses, the supervisor may be the employer and / or the owner.

Worker

Any person who is in a contract of service or apprenticeship, written or oral, expressed or implied.

Joint Health and Safety Committees / Worker Safety Representative

Joint health and safety committees are required in each workplace where 20 or more workers are regularly employed or where required by WorkSafeBC. Committees must consist of worker representatives, employer representatives and two co-chairs. A worker health safety representative — required in workplaces where there are more than nine but fewer than 20 regularly employed workers and where required by WorkSafeBC —has essentially the same duties as a committee.

Fleet Vehicle

A company-owned, leased or rented vehicle for the purpose of work activities.

Near-Miss Incident

Any act, behaviour, condition or event that an employee believes was unsafe and (under different circumstances) may have led to property damage and / or personal injury.

OHSR

The *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation*, which contains the legal requirements that must be met by all workplaces under the inspectional jurisdiction of WorkSafeBC. This includes most workplaces in B.C. except mines and federally chartered workplaces such as banks, interprovincial and international transportation, telephone systems, and radio, television, and cable services.

Passenger Car / Light-Duty Truck

Vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of less than 3856kg and includes cars, vans, Class 1 and certain Class 2a light-duty trucks.

Personal Vehicle

A vehicle owned, leased or rented by a worker and used for work activities.

Training

Employers are required to provide workers with the information, instruction, training, and supervision necessary to ensure the health and safety of those workers in carrying out their work and the safety of other workers. (This includes company-owned or personal vehicles driven for work.) Employers are expected to perform a job task analysis to determine the risks faced by the worker. This analysis must consider all of the tasks a worker is expected to perform; the environment and circumstances in which the work is to be performed; the equipment the worker is expected to use and all of the risks associated with the work.

Winter Weather

Weather that includes, but is not limited to, seasonal cold (7° to 1° degree Celsius), freezing or below freezing temperatures, significant rain events or precipitation, snow, black ice, fog, reduced daylight and avalanches.

Safe Work Procedure (SWP)

A written procedure that provides direction to a worker on how to safely complete a work task. The purpose of the SWP is to eliminate, control or minimize specific occupational hazards and reduce the risk to people, equipment, materials, environment, and company processes.

WCA

The *Workers Compensation Act*, which describes the jurisdiction of WorkSafeBC and its authority to make regulations, inspect workplaces, issue orders and impose penalties. The WCA also explains the rights and responsibilities of employers and workers with respect to health and safety.

** For the purposes of this sample safe work procedure*

Disclaimer

This sample safe work procedure does not take the place of professional occupational health and safety advice and is not guaranteed to meet the requirements of applicable laws, regulations, and rules, including workplace health and safety laws and motor vehicle and traffic laws. The members of the Winter Driving Safety Alliance and their respective employees, officers, directors or agents (collectively the "WDSA") assume no liability for or responsibility for any loss or damage suffered or incurred by any person arising from or in any way connected with the use of or reliance upon the information contained in this sample safe work procedure including, without limitation, any liability for loss or damage arising from the negligence or negligent misrepresentation of any of the WDSA in any way connected with the information contained in this sample safe work procedure. The information provided in this sample safe work procedure is provided on an "as is" basis. WDSA does not guarantee, warrant, or make any representation as to the quality, accuracy, completeness, timeliness, appropriateness, or suitability of any of the information provided, and disclaims all statutory or other warranties, terms, or obligations of any kind arising from the use of or reliance upon the information provided, and assumes no obligation to update the information provided or advise on future developments concerning the topics mentioned.