

Tips for BC Log Haulers

Winter roadways offer the ultimate challenge – and danger. Here are a few tips to help you prepare and stay safe on the road.

1. **Pre-trip check.** There are enough things that will surprise you during the day without your truck being one of them. Know your gear intimately. Run quality equipment so you can be confident it will perform as you expect it to, especially in those tense moments when you need it most.
2. **Pre-work information.** Before your next haul talk to your supervisor to get the details – directions, road conditions and terrain, and hazards you may encounter. Check with the dispatcher and other truckers on that haul for additional information.
3. **Have a plan.** Picture how your day will roll out – from start to finish. Count on a few snags that require you to adjust your plan; be prepared for them.
4. **Weather check.** Check tomorrow's weather forecast tonight. Anticipating what you are likely to encounter puts you in control. Reduce your stress by leaving a few minutes early, giving yourself time to drive at a casual pace, and according to road conditions.
5. **Use your outside thermometer.** Traction is fine at +10 degrees on bare pavement, and below -10 degrees. But when temperatures hover around zero, conditions get tricky. With inversions and unpredictable winter weather patterns, temperatures change dramatically. That means your traction can change quickly, too.
6. **Look for the glaze.** With your headlights on, scan the road ahead of you and watch for that tell-tale shine telling you it's slippery. If you can't quite see it in your lane, glance at the road in the headlights of on-coming traffic. If it looks slick in that lane, it's probably equally slick in your lane, too.
7. **Distractions.** Keep both hands on the wheel, focus on the task at hand, and leave the gadgets alone!
8. **Active scanning.** Scan your surroundings as far down the road as you can see. Pay attention to road signs, traffic, intersections, wildlife, icy patches, unusual features. What do you expect for this stretch? Scan the zone half way between you and the next corner and look for new information that may cause you to adjust your speed, position, or plan. Check the mirrors every 7 or 8 seconds (conditions permitting). Glance at the dashboard. Check the ditches. Repeat often.
9. **Share information.** Rookie or seasoned veteran, we all need to know about a hazard before it becomes a surprise. If you see something that wasn't there yesterday, let your co-workers know. We're all in this together.
10. **Have a backup plan.** What's my escape route? An oncoming car is drifting into your lane – what do you do? The ditch is too deep to survive, better to slack off and prepare for a quick stop, if necessary. Think ahead – what will I do if...?

11. **Use all the tools you can to see your work environment:** A clean windshield inside and out, extra windshield washer fluid, and a good set of sun glasses.
12. **Adjust your headlights for the conditions.** Find a combination that works. Lights with 10 million candle-power don't work in a blinding snow storm, they simply increase the glare reflected back to your eyes. Amber fog lights soften the glare of driving snow. Point one slightly toward the right – you might not be able to see the centre-line, but you can use the snow bank or ditch line as a steady reference and you can see that moose coming out of the ditch a half-second earlier.
13. **Patience and courtesy.** Other people out on the road might not be the skilled professional you are. Practice your best driving etiquette. Give them some space. Let them go ahead.

Know before you go. Check DriveBC.ca

Disclaimer. This tip sheet 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 tip sheet 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 tip sheet. The information provided in this tip sheet 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.(09-2014)