



Winter Safety Tips

Arlington Heights
Fire Department



Winter Weather and Your Car

Prepare your car for Winter



- Check the ignition, brakes, wiring and fan belts
- Change and adjust the spark plugs
- Check air, fuel and emission filters, and PCV valve
- Inspect the distributor
- Check the battery
- Check tires for air, sidewall wear and tread depth
- Check antifreeze level and the freeze line



Necessary Equipment your trunk should carry:

- A properly inflated spare tire, wheel wrench and tripod-type jack
- Jumper cables
- Tow and tire chains
- Bag of salt or cat litter



Be prepared with a “survival kit” that should always remain in the car:

- Working flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Exterior windshield cleaner
- Ice scraper and snow brush
- Non-perishable, high energy foods like unsalted canned nuts, dried fruits and hard candy



Tips for Safer Sledding & Tobogganing

Children ages 5 to 9 are most susceptible to injury.

- ❄️ Sled on spacious sloping hills which have a level run-off at the end so that the sled can come to a halt safely. Avoid steep slopes and slopes located near streets and roadways.
- ❄️ Check slopes for bare spots, holes and other obstructions which might cause injury.
- ❄️ Make sure the sledding path does into cross traffic and is free from hazards such as large trees, fences, rocks or telephone poles.
- ❄️ Do not sled on or around frozen lakes, streams or ponds because the ice may be unstable.
- ❄️ The proper position for sledding is to sit or lay on your back on the top of the sled, with your feet pointing downhill. Sledding head first increases the risk of head injury and should be avoided.



Preventing Frostbite & Hypothermia

FROSTBITE is the most common injury resulting from exposure to severe cold. Superficial frostbite is characterized by white, waxy, or grayish-yellow patches on the affected areas.



Treat superficial frostbite by taking the victim inside immediately. Remove any constrictive clothing items and jewelry that could impair circulation. Place dry, sterile gauze between toes and fingers to absorb moisture and to keep them from sticking together. Slightly elevate the affected part to reduce pain and swelling. Re-warming usually takes 20 to 45 minutes or until tissues soften

HYPOTHERMIA occurs when the body's temperature drops below 95 degrees Fahrenheit. Symptoms of this condition include change in mental status, uncontrollable shivering, cool abdomen and a low core body temperature.



Treat hypothermia by getting the victim out of the cold. Add insulation such as blankets, pillows, towels or newspapers beneath and around the victim. Be sure to cover the victim's head. Keep the victim in a horizontal flat position.



Ice Skating Safety



Wear skates that fit comfortably and provide enough ankle support to keep you on your feet.

Skate only on specially prepared skating areas where you are sure the ice is strong enough to withstand your weight.

Always check for cracks, holes and other debris.



Before setting out on your skating expedition, learn basic skating skills, such as how to stop and fall safely.

Never skate alone!



Ski & Snowboard Safety

A beginning skier or snowboarder should get proper instruction from a certified instructor before hitting the slopes. Among other basic skills, it is necessary to know how to fall down and get back up.



Check with the local Ski Patrol for conditions and study a map of the area you will be skiing or snowboarding. One of the most important safety rules is to never ski or snowboard alone!

Improperly fitted or mis-adjusted equipment can cause the best skier or snowboarder injury. If you own ski or snowboard equipment, have them checked for proper fit and adjustment periodically throughout the season.



Boots and binding are the most important part of the ski or snowboard outfit. Proper clothing is also an important part of your equipment. Dress in layers. Bright colors are the best because they can be seen at a great distance.





Snow Shoveling

If you have a history of heart trouble, do not shovel without a doctor's permission.

Take it slow! Shoveling (like lifting weights) can raise your heart rate and blood pressure dramatically - so pace yourself.

Freshly fallen, powdery snow is easier to shovel than the wet, packed-down variety.

Push the snow as you shovel. It's easier on your back than lifting the snow out of the way.

Lift with your legs bent, not your back. Keep your back straight.

Do not work to the point of exhaustion. If you feel tightness in your chest, stop immediately!

