



## West Virginia Offices of the Insurance Commissioner

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### *Plan Your Travel during Winter Weather Carefully*

*February 5, 2021*

- During a winter storm, minimize your travel by car. Even if winter weather conditions aren't obviously present, conditions like black ice can cause vehicles to lose control.
  
- If you plan on traveling by vehicle during the winter, make sure to winterize your vehicle. Check (or have a mechanic check) the following items in your car:
  - Ensure that antifreeze levels are sufficient to avoid freezing.
  - Ensure your battery and ignition are in top condition and battery terminals are clean.
  - Check for wear and fluid levels of breaks.
  - Check for leaks and crimped pipes in your exhaust system, and repair/replace as necessary. Carbon monoxide is deadly and usually there is no warning of its presence.
  - Fuel and air filters - replace and keep water out of the system by using additives and maintaining a full tank of gas. A full tank will keep the fuel line from freezing.
  - Ensure your heater and defroster are working properly.
  - Check your lights and hazard lights to ensure they're working properly.
  - Check your oil level and weight. Heavier oils can congeal more at low temperatures and do not lubricate as well.
  - Repair any problems with your windshield wipers and maintain proper washer fluid levels.
  - Install good winter tires with adequate tread. Remember that some jurisdictions may require vehicles be equipped with chains or snow tires with studs.
  
- Keep a winter weather supply kit in your vehicle, including:
  - Shovel
  - Windshield scraper and small broom
  - Flashlight
  - Battery-powered radio
  - Extra batteries
  - Water
  - Food
  - Matches
  - Extra clothing and blankets to keep warm, such as coats, hats, socks, mittens, etc.
  - First aid kit
  - Medications
  - Tow chain or rope
  - Jumper cables
  - Road salt and sand
  - Emergency flares
  - Fluorescent distress flag

- If you're traveling overseas, remember to enroll in the [U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive important information from the embassy about safety conditions in your destination country, helping you make informed decisions about your travel plans.
  - By enrolling, the U.S. Embassy can contact you in an emergency, whether a natural disaster, civil unrest or family emergency.
  - Take a look at the [U.S. Department of State's Traveler's Checklist](#) too, where you can get helpful tips about safety and security, crisis planning, health precautions and money matters.

For more information about weather preparedness, please visit our website at:

<https://www.wvinsurance.gov/State-Office-of-the-National-Flood-Insurance-Program>

or contact us at: [OICFlood@wv.gov](mailto:OICFlood@wv.gov) or 304-414-8462.

[www.wvinsurance.gov](http://www.wvinsurance.gov)