

December Transportation Safety Newsletter: Holiday Safety

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Oregon Department
of Transportation

Transportation Safety

December 2024

Stay Safe this Holiday Season



The holidays are a time for celebration, but they're also one of the busiest travel seasons of the year. Roads are more crowded, weather conditions can be unpredictable, and festivities often involve alcohol.

Plan ahead to keep yourself and others safe:

- Designate a sober driver before heading to any celebration.
- Try rideshare, public transit, or carpooling.
- Hosting a party? Offer non-alcoholic options and encourage guests to plan for a safe ride home.

Impairment isn't just about alcohol. If you feel different, you drive different—whether it's from drugs, medication, or fatigue.

Remember, *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*. Don't let a poor decision ruin the season.

Snow Zones Ahead

Oregon winters bring unique challenges, from rain-slick roads to snowy mountain passes. Here's how to prepare for safe winter travel:

- Prep your car: Check your tires, wipers, and fluids before driving in winter.
- Pack a winter car kit: Include a flashlight, blanket, water, snacks, and a phone charger.
- Carry chains: Know how to install them, and check for chain requirements on your route.
- Drive cautiously: Slow down, increase following distance, and avoid sudden movements.



Did you know? Passing a snowplow on the right isn't just risky—it's illegal. The wing plow can extend several feet beyond the truck, making it easy to collide with.

Plan your trip with up-to-date road conditions at [TripCheck.com](https://www.tripcheck.com). Stay prepared and arrive safely.

Need more information about all things winter Travel visit our [Winter Travel Tips](#) webpage.

Teaching Kids to be Distraction-Free

Distraction is a leading cause of accidents, and building safe habits starts young. A partnership between the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) and State Farm® has created tools to help parents and guardians teach distraction-free behavior.



Here's how to set the example:

- Model good behavior: Put your phone away when driving, walking, or biking.
- Talk to your kids: Discuss the dangers of distracted driving and emphasize staying aware of surroundings.
- Practice together: Point out distractions during family drives and share strategies to avoid them.

Help raise a generation of safe, focused road users. [Learn more about these resources.](#)

Driver Education

For teen drivers, education is a game-changer. Enrolling in an ODOT-approved driver education course equips them with critical skills, reduces risky behavior, and could save their life.

Benefits of driver education:

- Teens who complete the course get fewer tickets.
- Teens may qualify for insurance discounts, offsetting the course cost.
- Students gain confidence handling real-world driving situations.

Help your teen start their journey safely. Learn more at [WhyDriveWithEd.com](https://www.whydrivewithed.com).



Older Driver Safety Awareness

Staying safe behind the wheel is important at every stage of life. For older drivers, proactive conversations about driving can make a big difference.

Key tips for aging drivers:

- **Stay informed:** Regularly review traffic laws and safe driving practices.
- **Monitor health:** Vision, hearing, and mobility all play a role in safe driving.
- **Be open to alternatives:** When driving is no longer safe, explore rideshare, transit, or carpool options.



Remember, fitness to drive is about performance—not age. Find resources and tips on are [Driver Fitness webpage](#).

Myth: Stop Signs Slow Traffic

Think stop signs are the best way to slow drivers down? Think again. Research shows stop signs often lead to speeding between intersections, increasing risk.

Better alternatives include:

- **Speed bumps** or humps.
- **Roundabouts**, which naturally slow traffic while improving flow.
- **Enhanced signage** with flashing lights or visibility improvements.

Learn more about effective traffic calming solutions from our partners at Kittelson & Associates, Inc. [Read the full analysis here](#).



Resources

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