



DRIVING IN THE RAIN

JAN 2021

LENGTH 2–5 minutes

TO PREPARE Read the background information.

BACKGROUND

- When you talk to your employees and drivers about wet weather, make sure they understand the importance of seeing, and being seen, when they are operating a vehicle.
- Wet pavement contributes to nearly 1.2 million traffic crashes each year. Weather can change from wet to dry fast in Texas, so you need to be ready for anything when it comes to driving.
- **Hydroplaning** means loss of traction and sliding on a film of water. Wet road surfaces can cause tires to hydroplane. This could result in loss of control and steering ability, as tires may lose contact with the pavement.
- Hydroplaning is caused by a combination of standing water on the road, car speed, and under-inflated or worn-out tires.

DISCUSSION

- Who knows someone who likes to be the center of attention? We all know somebody like that. He or she loves being in the spotlight and enjoys seeing and talking to everyone.
- When you're driving, especially in inclement weather, you DO want to be seen by everyone else, and you DO want to see them as well.



Should you use Cruise Control when the roads are wet?

- Cruise Control is for dry roads. When roads are wet, it can prevent you from slowing down quickly enough to avoid losing traction.



What is hydroplaning and what causes it?

- Hydroplaning means loss of traction and sliding on a film of water. Wet road surfaces can cause tires to hydroplane.
- Hydroplaning can result in loss of control and steering ability, as your tires may lose contact with the pavement. A combination of



standing water on the road, car speed, and under-inflated or worn-out tires causes Hydroplaning.



How can you prevent hydroplaning?

- Slow down during wet weather. Drivers should reduce their speed to correspond to the amount of water on the roadway. Even new tires can lose some contact with the roadway at speeds as low as 35 mph.
- Avoid hard braking or turning sharply, and drive in the tracks of the vehicle ahead of you.
- Allow ample stopping distance between cars by increasing the following distance of the vehicle in front of you.
- Allow ample time to slow down to stop for intersections, turns, and other traffic earlier than you would if roads were dry.

OPTIONAL DISCUSSION

Responding to a Skid

Even careful drivers can experience skids. You can prevent skids by driving slowly and carefully, especially on curves. Steer and brake with a light touch. When you need to stop or slow, do not brake hard or lock the wheels and risk a skid. Maintain mild pressure on the brake pedal.



If you feel your vehicle beginning to skid, what should you do?

1. Don't panic.
2. Continue to look and steer in the direction you want the vehicle to go.
3. Avoid slamming on the brakes because this will further upset the vehicle's balance and make it harder to control.

SUMMARY

- Overall, be extra cautious in wet weather. Safety starts before you drive, and your goal should be to see and be seen.
- Make sure your vehicle is always ready for the unexpected.
- Slow down, avoid hard braking and turning sharply, and allow ample stopping distance between you and the vehicles in front of you.