



# MAFES Dawg Tracks

December 2, 2013



*Safety Tips:  
Cold Weather*



In the last few years we have really had some weather changes in this area. As they say “knock on wood” our winters have been much milder during the past several years. No factory or school closings for extended periods due to snow and ice. There is another adage here that says, “If you don’t like the weather now, wait for 8 hours and it will change.” That being the case, we should heed some precautions that will help to protect us, in case of severe inclement weather.

Although we only have about 3 ½ months of “iffy” winter weather, the following tips, if used, will help to protect us during that period:

### **Eat and Drink Wisely-**

- Eating well balanced meals will help to keep you warmer.
- Refrain from using alcohol and caffeinated beverages, as they tend to cause a loss of body heat.
- Drink warm, sweet beverages or broth, which will help you to maintain body heat. If one has some dietary restrictions, consult your doctor for proper instructions.

### **Outdoor Safety- Dress Warm & Stay Dry-**

- Always wear a cap or hat. It has been said that the body temperature will remain 10° higher with your head covered.
- In extreme cold situations, you should wear a scarf, face mask or a gaiter to protect your face and mouth.
- Wear shirts or blouses that fit tight around your wrists for added protection.
- Always wear gloves. Mittens are warmer than gloves, but are bulky and hard to use. Mittens normally are harder to use than gloves and can create a hindrance.
- When inclement weather is among us, be sure to wear water repellent coats and boots.
- Wearing several layers of loose-fitting clothes helps to maintain your body temperature.

### **Avoid Exertion-**

- Cold weather puts added strain on your heart. If you have heart disease or high blood pressure, consult your doctor before doing any strenuous manual labor.
- Assuming that health conditions are satisfactory for cold weather work, you should dress warmly and work slowly and steadily. Do not exert yourself.

### **Understand Wind Chill-**

- Wind chill index is the temperature your body feels when air temperature combines with wind speed. It is based on the rate of heat loss from exposed skin caused by the effects of wind and air speed.
- When wind increases, it takes heat away from the body much quicker, thus reducing body temperatures.

### **Avoid Ice-**

Although we don’t experience ice that often in Mississippi, it does happen occasionally. We’ve all experienced the dangers of walking on ice. Most injuries result from falls on ice-covered sidewalks, porches, steps, and driveways. Keep a bag of salt or other chemicals for salt reduction handy for use after an ice storm. Sand is another medium that can be put on icy surfaces to reduce the chance of slippage.

### **Be Cautious About Travel-**

Although not directly related to agriculture, it could be related if employees are injured and can’t readily return to work.

- ✓ Listen to the radio and television for weather reports and travel advisories by the National Weather Service.
- ✓ Avoid travel in low visibility conditions.
- ✓ Avoid ice-covered bridges, overpasses and roads when possible.
- ✓ If you must travel by necessity, take a set of tire chains, a mobile radio, and a cell phone with you.
- ✓ If travel in inclement weather is a necessity, leave an itinerary of your travel plans with someone so that they will know your destinations and approximate time of arrival. With this information available to someone other than yourself, it will be easier to locate you, in case you’re running late for your final destination.
- ✓ Keep an emergency prepared packet of supplies in your vehicle, especially during the winter months.
- ✓ Clean the windshield with a brush and the defroster. Refrain from using hot or even warm water to clear the ice. There is always the possibility of shattering the windshield when using warm water on the cold glass.
- ✓ Don’t rely on the car heater only for sufficient heat. You could have a breakdown, so a blanket should be include in your emergency packet.
- ✓ Always carry additional warm clothing that is appropriate for cold winter conditions.

### **If you get stranded-**

- Tie a bright colored cloth to the antenna and raise the car hood.
- Move any needed supplies from the trunk to the interior of your vehicle.
- Wrap your body in all the available clothing and blankets that you have, depending upon the cold temperature. Move your arms and body while waiting for help.
- Run your vehicle engine about 10 minutes out of each hour and keep a window cracked about in inch while doing so. Be sure that snow isn’t blocking the exhaust pipe; otherwise you might suffer from carbon dioxide poisoning.
- Huddle with other people for warmth. Don’t eat the snow, as it will lower your body temperature.

**BE ALERT<>ACCIDENTS HURT!**

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**K.I.S.S.**

**<KEEP IT SAFE & SOUND>**

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Excerpts: [www.bt.cdc.gov](http://www.bt.cdc.gov)

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