

Press Release

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Allianz Global Assistance calls for vigilance and recommends that drivers prepare their cars for the winter cold

Of course it's impossible to know if this will be a harsh winter or not. But if you can begin it with caution, you're more likely to stay safe, and preparing your vehicle for winter, without delay, is the best way to avoid getting caught on the road in adverse weather conditions. Extreme cold, snowfall, ice, fog...Allianz Global Assistance offers drivers advice to help them get through this period without a hitch.

Winter tyres, a wise precaution

A basic rule of thumb: make sure that all tyres are in perfect condition. But **fitting a car with winter tyres** at this time of year might prove to be a driver's best choice. This not only helps preserve your traditional tyres but also helps improve your vehicle's safety in cold weather and on slippery roads. At the very least, make sure you have a kit of « tyre socks » at the ready to put on summer tyres when the roads are under snow.

The « extreme cold » kit helps you face winter's obstacles

Every winter, drivers find themselves trapped for hours in their cars because of traffic jams caused by snowfall or a chain of accidents caused by icy rain. At the very minimum you should have a flashlight, an ice scraper, a shovel and a blanket stored in your car. And always make sure you have warm clothing, gloves, boots, bottled water and snacks, even in you are only traveling a short distance, and especially if you are traveling with children. Pocket warmers can also be useful in case of a breakdown and prolonged waiting.

Have a check-up before hitting the road

Cars today are safer than ever but winter puts them to the test, and dealing with even a minor breakdown when it's 0° or -10° outside is always complicated and stressful. An excellent preventive measure is and will always be to have your car checked by a professional at the beginning of winter or before a long journey. And then getting a few simple checks before leaving can help you avoid some difficulties:

- Periods of extreme cold can greatly tax and drain a car's battery. If the battery is easily accessible, make sure its wires are not damaged, and that it is completely charged. Also, have an extra pair of jumper cables in the boot for a quick restart by any other driver in the vicinity.
- To see and to be seen is a basic principle of road safety. Drivers must be sure that all of their vehicle lights, including fog lights, are clean and in good working order. Faulty or missing light bulbs must obviously be replaced and the lights inside the car must be checked. It's also important to check that the windshield wipers leave no traces on the windshield.
- Verify the oil, water and wiper fluid levels and fill them if necessary. And don't forget to add the appropriate anti-freeze...

Don't play superman with the weather...

Before getting behind the wheel in winter, it's as easy as it is smart to check the weather report of the route you're taking. And it's also wise to delay a trip if weather conditions are too extreme or too uncertain, even for those who are convinced they're champions at driving on ice...

An essential precaution: Before every trip, make sure that your cell phone is completely charged and that you have a recharging system in your car.

Caution, caution, caution

The road seems perfectly dry and clear... except that it's not! Black ice in a bend in the road that you approach too quickly will most certainly send you and your car off the road, even with the best brakes in the world... A blanket of fog in a little valley will render the taillights of other automobiles invisible... To get to a destination in one piece, drivers must be extra careful, and in particular:

- They should slow down, even if they think they know the road, and not blindly trust their excellent reflexes if there is a storm, or if the road is icy or covered in snow...
- They should respect even greater safety distances from other cars to avoid having to brake suddenly.

The good reflex: remember to take along your assistance company's phone number and have it handy should you need help in any situation!

About Allianz Global Assistance

How can we help?

International leader in Assistance, Travel Insurance and health, life & home care services, today Allianz Global Assistance's global family counts more than 13 224 employees who live to help. They speak 58 different languages and work throughout the world with a network of 400,000 service providers and 180 correspondents. 250 million people, or 4% of the world's total population, benefit from its services, which the Group provides on all five continents.

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