During the winter, one hazard to be mindful of when behind the wheel is black ice. Black ice – which can be almost invisible – forms when the air temperature is warmer than pavement, which causes moisture to rapidly freeze and create a thin, transparent layer of ice on the roadway.

To help avoid an incident, the Minnesota Departments of Transportation and Public Safety recommend observing the following tips:

- Keep your distance. The distance needed to stop on black ice is twice as long as for normal driving circumstances. Keep at least a 5-second following distance behind the vehicle in front of you.

- Be especially careful when driving on bridges, overpasses and tunnels, and in the early morning when the air temperature rises faster than the pavement temperature.

- Never brake while driving on ice. Applying pressure to your brakes while on black ice will cause a vehicle to skid. Brake only during your approach.

- Salting and sanding can neutralize black ice. However, drivers should be aware that salt loses its effectiveness at about 15° F or colder.

Information courtesy of Safety+Health® magazine