



Black Ice: A hazard for drivers

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

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