



## Winter Driving Safety

### RISK ALERT

Winter weather driving can be very dangerous if the vehicle and/or driver is not prepared. We all know Nebraska winters can be unpredictable, so it's always a good idea to be prepared. As the old saying goes "better safe than sorry." This risk alert is intended to remind Bus Drivers to stay aware and prepared.



**STOPPING** the bus in winter weather conditions can be difficult if the road surface is not dry. Remember a 30 ton bus can take 12 times longer to stop than the average vehicle on the road. When preparing to stop a bus, there are a few things to be mindful of:

- **Apply the brakes slowly:** Be firm but gentle. Do not pump the brakes.
- **Do not slam on the brakes:** This might cause the bus to lose control.
- **Do not tailgate:** It is important to give the bus enough room to stop safely and properly.

Staying in control of the bus is always the goal, especially when traveling in dangerous winter road conditions. It is important to be cautious of slick conditions on the roadways, as the school bus may begin to slide and lose the ability to stop, and likewise so might other vehicles on the road. Listed below are some tips to help keep bus drivers in control of the situation at all times:

- **Go slow:** It may become important to drive slower than the posted speed limit if the road conditions are dangerous.
- **Pay strict attention to the road:** Try to minimize other distractions around you.
- **Be aware of wet looking surfaces:** Temperatures may drop while on route, making the wet surfaces possibly icy.
- **Always assume the worst and be very cautious:** When road conditions are severe, a driver's reaction time can be altered.
- **Be patient with other drivers:** Do not allow other drivers to change your attitude.
- **Stay informed of weather conditions:** Nebraska weather is ever changing, so try to listen to the radio for additional weather updates.

Preparation is vital to staying in control during winter road conditions. Each day before a driver leaves for his/her bus route, the driver should check the forecast for that day. Even if the weather isn't threatening when the driver leaves for the route, that does not mean the weather will not become threatening by the end of the day. Here is a list of suggested items to pack and store on the school bus in case of a Winter Emergency:

- Winter Boots
- Ice Scraper
- Blanket
- Extra socks
- Gloves
- Hats
- Shovel
- Tire Chains
- Flashlight
- Tire Wrench
- List of Emergency's phone number