



Driving in the wet

The onset of winter brings about a change in road conditions, so motorists need to adopt a wet weather attitude.

Driving through flood waters

In wet weather, it's important to be aware of local road conditions and areas that don't drain well after heavy rain. If you know that a road is prone to flooding, alter your driving route to avoid it.

If, however, you are confronted by a flooded road, and no alternative routes are available, be sure to check the water depth before proceeding. Look for flood water depth markers. If there aren't any nearby, proceed with extreme caution.

Use the bottom of your radiator fan blades as a benchmark. If the water is higher than that, it's too deep and you should stop and turn around.

Should you decide to proceed, you risk causing damage to your car's engine or radiator. This is because the fan will act as a propeller, sending water all over the electrical system. On top of that, the pressure of the water on the fan blades can bend or break the blades, causing damage to the radiator.

If it's not too deep, proceed with caution, driving very slowly. Once you have passed through the water crossing on to dry land, apply light pressure to the brakes over the next 100 metres to help them dry out. After you've travelled about one kilometre, apply the brakes heavily

a couple of times, just to make sure they are operating effectively – remember to check that the road is clear first. It's also a good idea to check the underside of the engine for any debris that may be attached., remember to dry out any wet carpets, mats and underfelt as a precaution against mould and rust.

Flood waters can run fast and can have many hidden dangers with debris under the water such as fence wire, downed power lines, tree branches and large rocks.

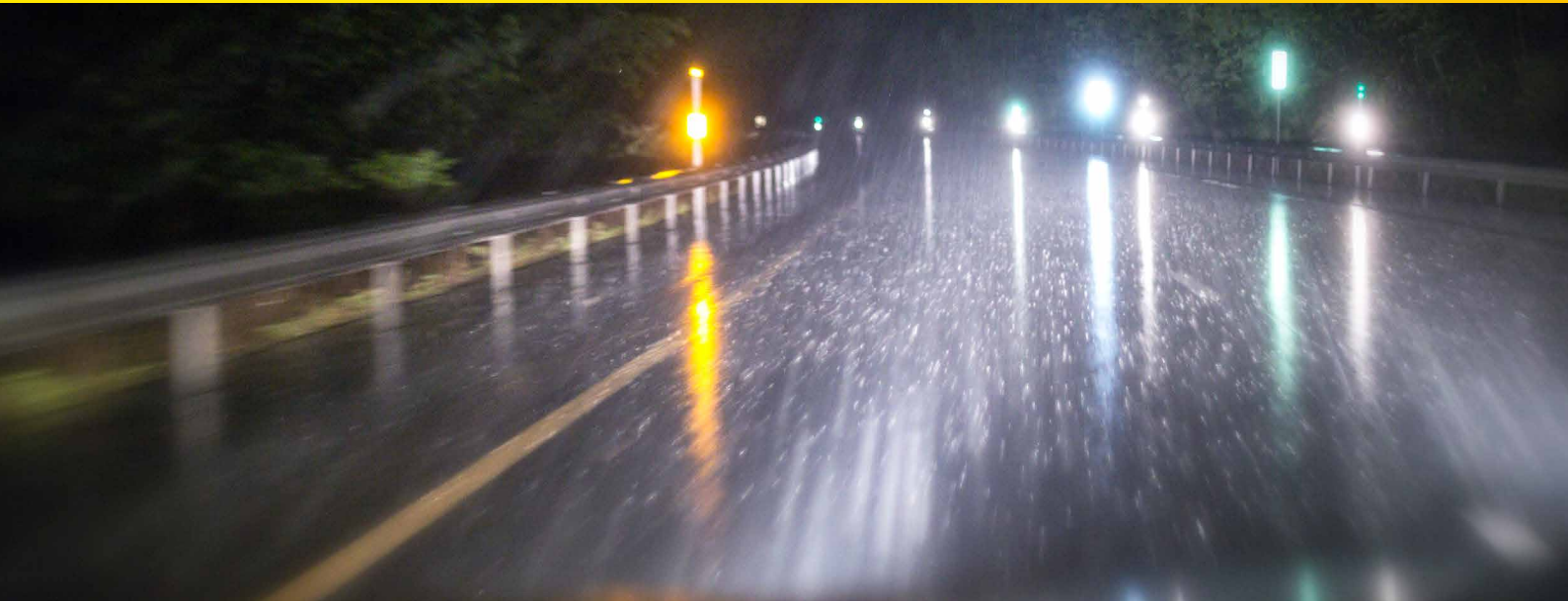
Aquaplaning

Travelling too fast on a road covered with water can lead to aquaplaning. This happens when the tyres glide over the water without gaining traction from the road surface, resulting in loss of control.

To reduce your chances of aquaplaning the message is simple – slow down in the wet.

But if you find yourself in this situation there are a few things to remember:

- Take your foot off the accelerator to reduce speed.
- When you've regained control, drive slowly through any remaining water on the road.
- If you slam on the brakes, you're more likely skid out of control.



Battling fog and rain

Fog and rain can reduce visibility and make roads slippery.

In these conditions, reduce your speed until you can clearly see the road and traffic ahead. Keep in mind that signposted speed limits show the maximum safe speed in good driving conditions.

When visibility is poor, turn your headlights on. Don't use high beam as this will dazzle other drivers, plus it's easier to see in foggy conditions on low beam.

Leave several car lengths between you and the car in front, to allow for greater reaction time and stopping distance.

Tyre safety

Your tyres are the only part of your car in contact with road, so it's crucial that they're in good condition.

You must have a minimum of 1.5mm depth of tread over the entire tread area. Make sure all the tyres, including the spare, have adequate tread. If any are worn, replace them.

Windscreen wipers

Before winter sets in, make sure your windscreen wipers are operating properly and the blades haven't split or perished. If your wipers are leaving smears across the windscreen, replace them.

Why not check your wiper blades when you're washing your car? Just lift the blade from the screen, rinse with clean water, and then look for signs of wear.

We're here to help

Call our Road Safety team on 8202 4570
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