



BROOME COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD NEWSLETTER

Broome County Health Department 225 Front St. / Binghamton, NY 13905

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This Holiday Season Drinking and Driving is NOT an Option!

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Before you drink this holiday season, think of the options:

- Plan a designated driver
- Take a cab
- Spend the night

Did you know each of the following contains the same amount of alcohol?

- 12 oz. can of beer at 5% alcohol
- 5 oz. glass of wine at 12% alcohol
- 1.5 oz. of 80-proof liquor at 40% alcohol
- 12 oz. wine cooler at 5% alcohol



What is BAC?

- BAC stands for "blood alcohol concentration." It's a measure of the amount of alcohol in your blood.
- In New York State, a BAC of more than .05% is evidence that your ability is impaired by alcohol (DWAI or driving while ability impaired).
- A BAC of .08% or more is evidence of intoxication (DWI, driving while intoxicated, and/or driving with a BAC of .08 or more.)
- Under New York's [Zero Tolerance Law](#), drivers under age 21 may be detained for driving with as little as .02% BAC.

New York has new, tougher laws on drinking and driving.

Aggravated Vehicular Homicide:

Drivers who kill someone in a drunk or drugged driving crash and also have at least one of these:

- BAC of .18 or higher
- Prior DWI conviction within the last 10 years
- Crash caused the death of more than one person
- Crash killed one person and severely injured others
- Offender was driving with a suspended or revoked license from any state

This violation is class B felony with a penalty of up to 25 years in prison.

Aggravated Vehicular Assault:

Drunk or drugged drivers who cause serious physical injury to another person and also have at least one of these:

- BAC of .18 or higher
- Prior DWI conviction within the last 10 years
- Crash caused serious injury to more than one person
- Offender was driving with a suspended or revoked license from any state

This violation is a class C felony with a penalty of up to 15 years in prison.

Tips for Safe Winter Driving



- **Get your car serviced now.**

Start the season off right by ensuring your vehicle is in optimal condition.

- Visit your mechanic for a tune-up or other routine maintenance.
- Have your entire vehicle checked for leaks, bad hoses or other needed part repairs or replacements.
- If you plan to use snow tires, have them installed now. Check out www.safercar.gov for tire ratings before purchasing new ones. For existing tires, check to ensure they're properly inflated, the tread is sufficient with no uneven wear, and that the rubber is in overall good condition.

- **Check your battery.**

When the temperature drops, so does your battery. It takes more power to start your car in cold weather than in warm weather.

- Have your mechanic check your battery for sufficient voltage.
- Have the charging system and belts inspected.
- If necessary, replace the battery and/or make system repairs.

- **Check your cooling system.**

When coolant freezes, it expands which can potentially damage your vehicle's engine block beyond repair. Don't let this happen to your vehicle this winter!

- Make sure you have enough coolant in your vehicle and that it's designed to withstand the winter temperatures you might experience in your area. A 50/50 mix of coolant to water is sufficient for most regions of the country. See your owner's manual for specific recommendations.
- Thoroughly check the cooling system for leaks or have your mechanic do it for you.
- If your system hasn't been "flushed" for several years, have it done now! Coolant also needs to be refreshed periodically to remove dirt and rust particles that can clog the cooling system and cause it to fail.

- **Fill your washer reservoir.**

During the winter season, it is easy to use a lot of washer fluid fairly quickly.

- Completely fill your vehicle's reservoir before the first snow hits.
- Use high-quality, "no freeze" fluid.
- Buy extra to keep on hand in your vehicle.

- **Check your windshield wipers and defrosters.**

Safe winter driving depends on achieving and maintaining the best visibility possible.

- Make sure your wipers work and replace worn blades. If you live in an area with a lot of snow and ice, consider installing heavy-duty winter wipers.
- Check to see that your window defrosters work properly.

- **Inspect your tires.**

Regardless of season, inspect your tires monthly and always before embarking on long road trips.

- Check tire pressure to ensure each tire is filled to the vehicle manufacturer's suggested PSI (refer to owner's manual). Be sure tires are cold (haven't been driven for at least 3 hours) when you check them. Keep a tire pressure gauge in your car at all times.
- Look closely at tread. Tread should be at least 1/16 of an inch or greater on all tires.

- **Know your car.**

Every vehicle handles differently so take the time now to learn how to best handle your vehicle in winter weather driving conditions.

- Drive slowly and increase your following distance during bad weather. Be sure you know what kind of brakes your vehicle has and know how to use them properly.
- If you find yourself in a skid, stay calm and ease your foot off the gas while carefully steering in the direction you want the front of your vehicle to go. This procedure, known as "steering into the skid" will bring the back end of your car in line with the front.

Safe Winter Driving Tips Continued...

- **Plan your travel and route.**

Keep yourself and others safe by planning ahead before you venture out into bad weather.

- Check weather, road conditions and traffic.
- Don't rush! Give yourself plenty of time to get to your destination.
- Familiarize yourself with directions and maps before you go.
- Keep your gas tank full in case you get stuck in a traffic jam or bad weather.
- If road conditions are hazardous, avoid driving if possible. Wait until road and weather conditions improve before venturing out in your vehicle.

- **Stock your vehicle.**

Carry items in your vehicle to handle common winter driving tasks – such as cleaning off your windshield – as well as any supplies you might need in an emergency.

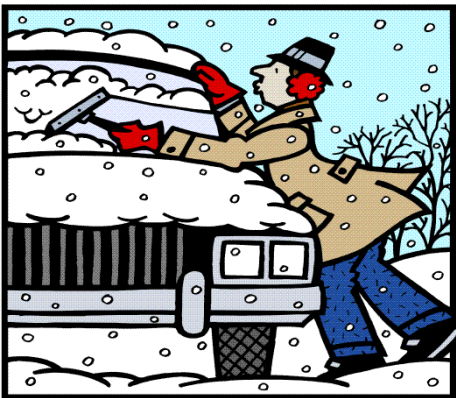
Keep the following on hand:

- Snow shovel, broom, and ice scraper.
- Abrasive material, such as sand or kitty litter, in case your vehicle gets stuck in the snow.
- Jumper cables, flashlight and warning devices, such as flares and markers.
- Blankets for protection from the cold.
- A cell phone, water, food, and necessary medicine (for longer trips or when driving in lightly populated areas).

- **Learn what to do in a winter emergency.**

If you are stopped or stalled in wintry weather, follow these safety rules:

- Stay with your car and don't overexert yourself.
- Put bright markers on the antenna or windows and keep the interior dome light turned on.
- To avoid asphyxiation from carbon monoxide poisoning, don't run your car for long periods with the windows up or in an enclosed space. If you must run your vehicle, clear the exhaust pipe of any snow and run it only sporadically – just long enough to stay warm.



Quick Tip – How to Check Your Tire Tread

The tire tread provides the gripping action and traction that prevent your vehicle from slipping or sliding, especially when the road is wet or icy. In general, tires are not safe and should be replaced when the tread is worn down to 1/16 of an inch. Tires have built-in treadwear indicators that let you know when it is time to replace your tires. These indicators are raised sections spaced intermittently in the bottom of the tread grooves. When they appear "even" with the outside of the tread, it is time to replace your tires. Another method for checking tread depth is to place a penny in the tread with Lincoln's head upside down and facing you. If you can see the top of Lincoln's head, you are ready for new tires.



Next Traffic Safety Board Meeting

Wednesday, January 28th
4 p.m.

Broome County Health
Department

Please R.S.V.P. to
(607)778-2807



Parents – Not sure which car seat to use?

Are you looking for a new seat for your infant, toddler or 4-8 year old child but overwhelmed by the choices and worried about how to properly install your car seat?

Use the New Five Star Ease of Use Ratings

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) now provides parents with a new five-star rating system that allows you to evaluate how easy certain car seat features are to use before you buy a seat.

Are All Seats Safe?

All car seats rated by NHTSA meet Federal Safety Standards & strict crash performance standards. While all rated seats are safe, they do differ in their ease of use in four basic categories:

Evaluation of Instructions	Vehicle Installation Features
Evaluation of Labels	Securing the Child

NHTSA Ease-of-Use 5-Star Ratings

NHTSA uses a five-star rating system to help consumers evaluate the four basic category ratings:

- ★★★★★ = Excellent features on this child restraint for this category.
- ★★★★ = Above average features on this child restraint for this category.
- ★★★ = Average features on this child restraint for this category.
- ★★ = Below average features on this child restraint for this category.
- ★ = Poor features on this child restraint for this category.
- N/A = Does not contain any features that require a rating.

Visit www.nhtsa.gov to access the full list of Ease-of-Use Ratings.

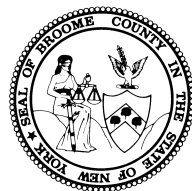
Get Your Car Seat Checked For Free!

Tuesday, December 16th

Broome County Sheriff’s Office

9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Please call (607) 778-2807 to schedule an appointment.



Barbara J. Fiala, Broome County Executive

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