



# HUMBOLDT COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

William F. Honsal, Sheriff

## **Media Release**

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**Subject:** Winter weather caution

A strong storm system is expected to make landfall this afternoon through Friday. The National Weather Service reports strong, gusty winds of up to 50 mph and heavy rains are expected to begin this afternoon and evening. Coastal hail and heavy mountain snow are expected Thursday and Friday.

With this storm, areas in Humboldt County above 1500 ft. could receive 8 to 18 inches of snow accumulation, with minor snow accumulations possible in areas down to 500 ft. The National Weather Service has issued a Winter Storm Warning for elevations above 1500 ft. beginning at 4 a.m. Thursday until 10 a.m. Saturday.

The Humboldt County Sheriff's Office would like to remind the public to take extra caution when traveling this week during winter weather.

### **Prior to travel**

- Check the National Weather Service for current weather forecasts.
- Check road conditions and chain requirements. Road conditions can be monitored online at the Caltrans website: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/d1/> or by calling 1-800-427-ROAD (7623). Live camera views of several county highways are also available at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist1/d1tmcl/>.
- No matter what distance you are traveling, consider storing a winter weather emergency kit in your vehicle. This kit should contain a flashlight with extra batteries, blankets, a warm change of clothing, water, snacks, a clean, dry towel, gloves and sand or kitty litter for traction if stuck in snow.
- Fill up your gas tank and keep it full during winter weather.
- Expect delays and allow enough time to arrive at your destination.
- Limit travel, if possible, when road and weather conditions are poor.

### **During travel**

- Slow down. Most winter accidents are the result of driving too fast for the conditions. Use low gears to slow your vehicle and avoid using your brakes when possible. While four-wheel drive and all-wheel drive improves traction, it does not help stop the vehicle and should not be relied on for safe travel.

- Turn off cruise control when driving in snow or wet road conditions.
- Watch for black ice. Ice can form any time the air temperature drops below 40 degrees, especially when it is windy.
- If your vehicle begins to slide, do not panic. Slowly take your foot off the gas pedal, do not use your brakes and steer your vehicle in the direction you wish to travel. If you must use brakes, gently pump the brake pedal so the brakes do not lock up.
- Avoid driving through deep water. The average vehicle can be swept off the road in 12 inches of moving water. Turn around and find another route.
- If you are experiencing trouble with your vehicle or low visibility, never stop in the middle of the road. Find a safe location to stop and address the issue. Always put your flashers on if stopping on the side of the road.
- Always carry chains and use them when required. For more information on chain installation and requirements, visit <http://www.dot.ca.gov/cttravel/chain-controls.html>.
- Always wear your seat belt and increase following distances during poor weather.
- If experiencing an emergency, call 911.

Also, be sure to have an emergency kit at home in case of storm related power outages. Stock emergency supplies like: water, non-perishable foods, critical medications, pet food and flashlights or battery-powered lanterns.