

LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

Comhairle Chontae an Longfoirt



WINTER WEATHER ADVICE FOR ROAD USERS AND HOUSEHOLDERS

Contact Numbers

Normal Hours

Longford County Council (043) 3343300

Out of Hours

Emergency Call Centre 1850 211525

Winter Weather Advice for Road Users

During periods of severe weather drivers should avoid making any journey by road unless it is absolutely necessary to do so. If driving in such conditions is unavoidable be prepared. The golden rule is drive with care and caution – expect the unexpected. Remember the primary responsibility for road safety rests with the road user.



Advice for Road Users in Icy or Snowy Conditions

- **Check local and National weather forecasts before setting out on a journey (www.met.ie).**
- **Clear your window and mirrors before you set out on your journey. Have a windscreen scraper and de-icer with you.**
- **Do not use hot water on the windscreen as it can crack the glass. Luke warm water is as effective.**
- **Remove all snow from your vehicle before commencing your journey.**
- **Snow left on the roof may become loose and can drop onto the windscreen if you suddenly apply your brakes. This could cause sudden and unexpected restriction to your vision. It could also fall off during your drive and cause injuries to pedestrians or cause another driver to make a sudden reflex action.**
- **Remember it takes longer than normal to stop in icy conditions. Drive slowly and keep a safe distance from vehicles that are in front of you. The general advice is that the distance between vehicles should be at least twice what it would normally be.**
- **Select a low gear when travelling downhill and especially if you are travelling through bends.**
- **Manoeuvre gently and avoid harsh braking and sudden acceleration.**
- **Watch out for black ice, especially in sheltered areas or on shaded areas of roads under trees and adjacent to high walls. One of the features of travelling on Black Ice is a sudden reduction in tyre noise.**
- **Check tyre pressures including the tyre pressure of the spare wheel. Ensure that there is a minimum tread depth of 1.6mm on each of the tyres on your vehicle.**
- **For more detailed road safety advice drivers are advised to check www.rsa.ie**

Safety Tips for Pedestrians in Ice and Snow

- **Many slips and falls happen in places which people regard as being safe and secure. Typically pedestrians suffer injuries outside of their front door, on the path leading to their garage or fuel shed or while getting out of the car. At any time when there is either snow on the ground or icy conditions pedestrians need to exercise extra caution.**
- **If you are out walking in snow or icy conditions you should wear appropriate footwear. You should not walk with your hands in your pockets. It is advisable to wear gloves and to walk with your hands out so you can break your fall if you do slip.**
- **If a journey cannot be avoided you should walk on a footpath and only walk on a street when doing so cannot be avoided. If there are no footpaths walk on the right hand side of the road facing oncoming traffic on your side of the road. Remember that footpaths may not be treated so you should walk with extreme care. If you cannot avoid walking on either ice or snow you should bend your knees slightly and take slower and shorter steps than normal so as to help to reduce the chance of you having a slip or a fall.**
- **Visibility is reduced in snowy conditions. Drivers may find it difficult to see pedestrians. For this reason pedestrians should wear bright coloured clothing and a high visibility jacket or arm band. Pedestrians should also carry a torch. Pedestrians should ensure that their vision is not impeded by the clothing which they wear.**
- **Snow that is on the ground may conceal the fact that there is ice underneath it. Pedestrians should be aware that just because the ice is not visible does not mean that it is not there.**
- **Parents should inform their children before going out in the snow of the dangers they may face.**
- **Parents should also speak to their children about the dangers of throwing snowballs at passing motorists, cyclists and especially older pedestrians.**

Tips for Householders this winter



- **It is essential that older people in particular keep warm during periods of cold weather.**
- **You should ensure you have a sufficient supply of coal, oil or other heating fuel available before the onset of any cold spell.**
- **Maintaining a comfortable temperature in the rooms you are living in is essential. Room temperatures should be maintained at about 21°C.**
- **If you have an open fire, use a fire guard at all times.**
- **Do not hang clothes near an open fire.**
- **Make sure you fit smoke alarms where you can clearly hear them and test alarm batteries regularly.**
- **Make sure there is enough ventilation if you are using a natural gas or solid fuel fire in a room. Consider installing a carbon monoxide alarm close by.**
- **Ensure that you keep your living room warm throughout the day and heat your bedroom before going to bed.**

Assisting Older People

- **Check on your older neighbours to ensure that they have enough fuel and basic foods such as milk and bread in their home. Older people can also play their part by keeping in telephone contact with each other and with their family and neighbours.**
- **Advise older people to wear several layers of light clothing, rather than one layer of thick layer of clothing.**
- **Advise older people to be active and not to stay sitting for long periods. By spreading their chores throughout the day they can keep moving regularly.**
- **Older people especially need to eat well and should sip hot drinks regularly.**
- **Advise elderly people to keep a flask of hot drink by their bed which they can drink from if they are cold when they wake up.**