



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In anticipation of the first significant snow fall of the winter season, much of our region is under a winter storm watch for Tuesday night through late Wednesday evening. Trying to navigate roadways during this time can be particularly frustrating and even maddening. Not only do you have snow to deal with but there are fewer hours of daylight. That's why Clinton County Sheriff Dave Favro wants folks to know they can lessen the aggravations and risks associated with winter driving.

Avoid Starting Problems

- Get an engine tune-up in the fall.
- Battery and voltage regulator should be checked.
- Be sure all fluids are at proper levels.
- Make sure wiper blades are cleaning properly.
- Don't idle a cold vehicle's engine for a long time to warm it up. The right way to warm up a vehicle is to drive it.

Equipment & Supplies

- Snow Shovel, window scraper with a brush on one end
- Flashlight
- Jumper cables
- Flares or reflective triangles
- Cat litter, sand, salt or traction mats
- First-aid supplies
- Blankets, hats, mittens

Getting Unstuck

- Turn your wheels from side to side to push snow out of the way. Keep a light touch on the gas and ease forward. Try not to spin your wheels – you will just dig in deeper.
- Rocking the vehicle is another way to get unstuck. (Check your owner’s manual first – it can damage the transmission on some vehicles.) Shift from forward to reverse and back again. Each time you’re in gear, give a light touch on the gas until the vehicle gets going.

If You Get Stranded

- Stay in the vehicle. Don’t wander and get lost or frostbitten.
- Run the engine once every hour for heat or every half-hour in severe cold. Clear snow away from the tail pipe to prevent carbon monoxide buildup.
- Clear outside heater vents. (That’s the grill under the windshield.)
- Leave one window cracked open. Freezing winds and driving wet snow can quickly seal a vehicle.
- Signal to other motorists that you are stranded by using flares, flashlights or by tying a piece of brightly colored cloth to the radio antenna.

Don’t Risk a Heart Attack Shoveling

As long as you get the doctor’s clearance to do the physical activity, go ahead. But please use the following precautions:

Bundle up: Cold temperatures reduce circulation to the body’s extremities. Wearing weather-appropriate, layered clothing will help maintain body temperature and circulation.

Start early: Snow is easier to shovel when it first falls. The longer snow sits on the ground, it compacts, which makes it heavier. Removing compacted snow requires more exertion, placing stress on the heart.

Start gently: As with any physical activity or cardio exercise, the body must warm up. Ease into shoveling. Sudden exertion in cold weather is dangerous for the heart.

Keep hydrated: The body needs hydration, even in cold weather. When shoveling snow, take breaks and drink water regularly to prevent overexertion and dehydration.

Eat only lightly: Eating a small meal before shoveling will provide a source of energy. However, digestion puts strain on the heart, so eating a large meal before any physical activity should be avoided. Additionally, alcohol and caffeine should also be avoided just prior to shoveling.

Don't lift too much: Large loads of snow can be heavy and place strain on the heart, back and neck. Push, instead of lifting, small loads of snow. Using a small shovel will encourage smaller loads of snow and be lighter to move.

Listen to your body: Experts say the best indicator of whether or not snow shoveling is causing harm is to pay close attention to the body's signals. If you begin to feel winded or overexerted while shoveling, take a break. These are signs that you're doing more than your body can handle. At the first sign of any chest pain or discomfort, stop shoveling immediately and seek medical attention.

Other risk factors include:

- Being over the age of 50
- Having a history of heavy smoking
- Being overweight
- Having a sedentary lifestyle

All of these red flags are reasons get your physician's clearance before you try to remove snow.

#