



U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER

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<https://safety.army.mil>

## Know your vehicle

### *Cold weather conditions pose additional challenges for AMV operators*

By Mollie Miller

U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center

Taking extra care to “winterize” a vehicle as the temperatures turn cool is a yearly tradition for many as Americans prepare to hit the road for fall and winter sports, events, celebrations and family visits. An understanding of the importance of a few extra moments spent on maintenance checks helps ensure that snow and falling leaves remain pretty backdrops for fun times and not the cause of a deadly crash.

The same fall and winter road hazards that threaten to derail the best off-duty plans can have similar devastating effects on-duty for those driving Army Motor Vehicles (AMVs). Chief Warrant Officer 4 Christopher Volkert, U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center Ground Task Force senior maintenance/logistics officer, said when temperatures turn cool, the environment becomes an AMV operator’s biggest enemy.

“Lower temperatures coupled with rain or snow result in icy roads and leaves falling on pavement can create a slippery surface,” he said. “Cold weather can also invite maintenance problems if Army Motor Vehicles are not properly prepared and maintained according to the technical manuals.”

Volkert said that during the fall and winter months, it becomes increasingly important to ensure tires, breaks, windshield wipers and headlights are in good working order on all AMVs. Additionally, leaders must make sure all operators read their AMV manuals and have the appropriate training, time and equipment to set the conditions for AMV mission success.

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“Leaders must ensure that each vehicle has the emergency equipment and basic issue items for cold weather,” he said. “The technical manuals provide specific guidance for each type of equipment, telling the leader and the operator what equipment is required, and what to do and check before, during and after cold weather operations. Not knowing the vehicle and exceeding the AMV’s limitation is an open invitation for an accident.”

Knowing the vehicle and having the right equipment is only part of the risk management solution for keeping AMV operators safe during cold weather driving, however. Volkert said the most important thing all operators must do is take their time while traveling.

“One of the most important things people can do to mitigate the risks of cold weather driving is allow extra time to drive from point A to point B,” he said. “The extra time prevents the driver from being in a hurry and driving too fast on wet or icy roads.”

Volkert encourages all leaders and AMV operators to visit the Safety Center Web site and check out the array of tools that have been developed to keep drivers safe in whatever the road conditions.

“The Safety Center offers the Driver's Training Toolbox and the Ground Safety Web page to provide ‘one stop shopping’ to assist leaders and trainers find and deliver the information required to ensure Soldiers know how to operate safely in cold weather,” he said.

For more information on fall and winter driving safety and additional tips on how to stay safe during these cold weather months, visit <https://safety.army.mil>.

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## SIDEBAR

### When driving:

- Don't talk, text, eat or read a map or book.
- Enforce mandatory seat belt use.
- Avoid complacency and remain vigilant.
- Comply with published vehicle procedures.



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