

## WINTER OPERATIONS SAFETY CHECKLIST

The key to safe winter operations is preparation. To ensure winter services can be performed safely and correctly, you must make sure your crew members are adequately trained, your equipment is regularly serviced, and your snow routes are properly maintained.

The following checklists will help to ensure the safety of motorists as well as those responsible for performing winter operations in your organization:

### Personnel Preparation

#### PRE-WINTER OPERATION SAFETY TRAINING

Before winter comes, make sure your crew members are adequately trained in the use of equipment, safe material handling, and snow routes. All personnel responsible for planning and performing wintertime operations should attend an LTAP Winter Maintenance training class. This training, which is offered at various locations throughout the year, is an excellent way to prepare new personnel and act as a refresher for seasoned employees.

#### CHECKLIST: CREW SAFETY DURING WINTER OPERATIONS

- Employees are physically prepared to perform the tasks:
  - They are adequately rested.
  - They are in reasonably good health and capable of performing the tasks associated with winter operations.
  - They are not impaired by medication or alcohol.
  
- Personal protective equipment is available and accessible to employees:
  - Multi-layered warm clothing
  - Hardhat with liner
  - Safety vest
  - Adequate footwear for working in a cold, wet environment
  - Insulated work gloves or work gloves with liners
  
- Employees have access to emergency gear or a survival kit:
  - Communications (radio or cell phone)
  - Operators' personal belongings, such as a lunchbox, thermos or fluids, and any necessary prescribed medications
  - Flashlight with extra batteries
  - First aid kit
  - Ice scraper/snowbrush
  - Basic tool kit with jumper cables
  - Road flares or reflectors
  - Red flag for traffic control
  - Shovel
  - Fully charged fire extinguisher



## Equipment Preparation

### PRE-WINTER OPERATION EQUIPMENT PREPARATION

Just as you want your employees to be adequately trained and prepared before the start of the winter season, you want all equipment used to perform winter operations to also be readied and maintained to ensure safe operation and optimum performance. Any possible equipment malfunction in the middle of a storm, especially at night, could put both the operator and the motoring public at risk.

### CHECKLIST: CREW SAFETY DURING WINTER OPERATIONS

- Preventive maintenance is conducted.
- Seasonal inspection is performed.
- Deficiencies are identified and repaired.
- Plows and spreaders are attached to trucks and tested to ensure functionality.
- Plows are blocked up to facilitate attachment during winter.
- Engine block heaters are tested and cords properly stored.

### CHECKLIST: PRE-TRIP DAILY WINTER OPERATION

- Fuel
- Fluid levels
- CDL safety check
- Tires checked for pressure, tread wear, and cuts
- Heater/defroster
- Windshield wipers
- Windows and mirrors cleaned
- Lights working
- Backup alarm
- Plow flags and lights in place

### CHECKLIST: VEHICLE OPERATION SAFETY

- Use safety belt.
- Drive defensively.
- Obey all traffic laws.
- Back up safely/conduct circle-of-safety.
- Allow sufficient stopping distance.
- Never raise the dump bed higher than the truck cab when moving.
- Block the plow before changing blades.
- Disconnect the spreader hydraulics before unclogging.
- Monitor the fatigue level of yourself and other crew members.

## Facility Safety

Safety in and around the stockpile/assembly area is important during winter operations. With activity expected to be round-the-clock during storms, be especially wary of locations around that facility that may cause slips, trips, and falls. Good

housekeeping habits will help eliminate many of these hazards before they are covered by snow.

In addition, inspect lighting indoors and out, and repair or replace any broken fixtures and burned-out bulbs as soon as you can.

## Material Safety

Chemicals used during winter operations must be stockpiled and properly stored. Improperly stored winter chemicals can be harmful to the environment and may become unsuitable for use.

Winter materials should be identified with signs, and Safety Data Sheets (SDS) should be properly posted at the stockpile site. All employees should also be aware of emergency procedures and first aid as identified on the SDS forms.



Material for winter operations must be stockpiled and properly stored.

## Snow Route Hazards

Snow routes should be reviewed in advance of winter operations so that hazards can be identified for elimination or delineation. This review should be ongoing and incorporated into a routine maintenance program.

### CHECKLIST: TYPICAL ROADSIDE HAZARDS

- Canopied vegetation over the roadway
- Low-hanging limbs
- Utility lines less than 18 feet above the road surface
- Ponded water after a rain event
- Blocked/inadequate drainage systems
- High shoulders that can keep water from sheet flowing from the roadway
- Improperly designed or maintained driveways that channel water onto the roadway
- Severe shoulder drop-offs
- Drainage headwalls

Any identified hazards should be scheduled for elimination. If a hazard cannot be eliminated, it should be delineated with appropriate marker.



Canopied vegetation over a roadway.



Ponded water after a rain event.



Low-hanging branches.



Improperly designed or maintained driveway that channels water onto the roadway.

#### **CHECKLIST: DRY RUN**

Prior to the start of the winter season, employees should familiarize themselves with their routes and conduct a dry run of their assigned areas. Things to observe during a dry run include the following:

- Limits of the snow route
- Delineated hazards
- Drainage facilities
- Posted bridges
- Railroad crossings
- Safe turnaround locations

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***Remember: Think Safe!  
Act Safe! Be Safe!***

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