

Patrice: Now winter months can mean treacherous to driving conditions, snow, sleet, ice, all lead to accidents and injuries if you aren't careful. Charles Gilman, with Gilman and Bedigian, and joins us this morning with a look at some steps to take to avoid accidents. And this is fortunately a perfect morning to talk about this. We're talking about icy conditions, seeing incidents already.

Chaeles Gilman: Well, good morning, Patrice, and you're certainly right. Ice is prevalent, going to be prevalent today and this morning and it's going to affect their morning commute, what's left of it at least.

Patrice: All right. Let's talk about ways to minimize the chance that you'll end up in an accident. First of all, prepping for the winter months and what we know is to come - what kind of preparation should we do to our car, in our car?

Gilman: Well, to your car, you want to make sure that you have good tires. They are proper tires for winter driving - tires that have some tread on them. You keep your tires properly inflated. Your brake lights are working, your headlights are working. Today most cars will tell you if one of those things is malfunctioning or needs to be replaced.

Inside your car, it's nice to have jumper cables, make sure your cell phone is charged before you get in your car. I'm a big advocate of putting your cell phone down and away from you while you are driving, but you want to make sure it's charged if you do have an issue so that it's there and it's ready for you. And you don't have to worry about it being dead when you do need it.

Patrice: And if you have some kind of accident, I guess it would also be good to have in your car the things that can alert people around you - flares, or just a shovel or the kitty litter, to get you out if you're stuck.

Gilman: All those things are wonderful too. The kitty litter is great if you're stuck on snow or ice. You throw it under the tires and it should hopefully give you some traction to get out of where you are. The flares are a good warning so that you don't get banged into by another driver or plowed into - all of those things. Anything that can help with the safety - a small cone that can advise people to watch out because you're stuck, and maybe somebody even pulls over and helps you.

Patrice: And the best bet is to stay off the roads, but we know that isn't always the case for people. So just talk about some tips. If you have to be on the roads and it's those tricky conditions out there, what are some things to keep in mind?

Gilman: There's a lot of websites you can go to now, and they give you pointers about how to drive, if you must drive in the snow. Like if visibility's low, turn on your hazard lights. Slamming on your brakes in the ice and snow is not always the smartest thing to do. Intuitively, you think that's going to help you stop, when in reality, slamming on those brakes can just cause you to slide more. When pulsating the brakes, or just trying to slow down a little bit, is a much safer decision than slamming on your brakes all at once. There's plenty of good guides out there on the internet. Even YouTube videos you can watch about winter driving.

Patrice: You do your best. You try not to get into an accident, but say you do. What's your best course of action there. I mean, you don't want to stay out on the road in the middle of the ice because somebody else could come along. How do you handle it if you're in an accident and what are the next steps?

Gilman: The best thing to do is to exchange information with the other person or people that are involved in the accident. You have your cell phone, hopefully, ready to go and charged. Take a few pictures. Move to a safe place because you're right. One of the worst things you can do is stay on the road. We actually represented a client that had that happen one time. He was in an accident in snow and

ice and it became like a 14 car pile-up because everybody was so focused on taking pictures and exchanging information that nobody got out of the way. And the worst thing about those types of accidents are people outside of their car can get a lot more hurt than people inside their car. So the best thing you can do is exchange information and pull over. If you can get out of the way before you even try to because that is the safest thing to do.

Patrice: All right, Charles, thank you so much. We appreciate it.

Gilman: Be careful out there.