Prepare now for cold weather driving

Tuesday, January 5, 2010
Caddo Sheriff Steve Prator said it's not too early to prepare for cold temperatures that are expected to impact the area later this week.

To stay safe, motorists should keep their vehicles in top working condition and familiarize themselves with tips for driving in winter weather.

"Some motorists experienced small icy patches on the roadways as early as this morning," the sheriff said. "If you're not prepared for it or don't know how to drive in these conditions, it can be extremely hazardous."

Prator offered the following tips :

- To correct skidding, turn into the direction of the skid.
- Do not apply brakes in a skid.
- Make all moves slowly and carefully: starting, stopping, turning, speeding up, and slowing down.
- Sudden moves cause trouble when traction is poor.
- Keep plenty of distance between your vehicle and the vehicle ahead.
- Drive with your headlights on.
- Watch for icy surfaces on bridges and overpasses, even when the rest of the road appears to be in good condition.
- Look farther ahead in traffic. Actions by other drivers will alert you to problems and give you extra seconds to react.
- Trucks take longer to stop, so don't cut in front of them.
- Don't use your cruise control or overdrive when it's freezing.
- Don't get overconfident with four-wheel drive.
- It helps you get going quicker but won't help you stop any faster.
- Avoid going up a hill right behind another car. If it loses traction and starts to slow down, youâ€™ll be in trouble.
- Keep your gas tank full. It may be necessary to change routes or turn back when roads are icy or you may be caught in a traffic delay.
- Keep your windshield and windows clear.
- Use the car defroster and a clean cloth to keep the windows free of fog.