Winter Weather Driving – Landscaping Stats and Facts

FACTS

Key hazards related to winter weather driving in the landscaping industry.

1. **Reduced Visibility:** Snow, fog, and shorter daylight hours can severely reduce visibility.
2. **Slippery Roads:** Icy or snow-covered roads can cause vehicles to skid or lose control, especially when carrying heavy equipment or materials.
3. **Black Ice:** Black ice is a nearly invisible layer of ice on the road that can cause sudden and unexpected loss of vehicle control. This is particularly dangerous in early mornings or late at night.
4. **Increased Stopping Distances:** Snow and ice increase stopping distances, meaning drivers need more time and space to stop safely. In landscaping, where vehicles often carry heavy loads, this risk is magnified, making it crucial to drive more slowly and carefully in winter conditions.
5. **Cold Weather Vehicle Failures:** Cold temperatures can lead to vehicle breakdowns.
6. **Driver Fatigue:** Winter driving conditions often require more concentration and tiring for drivers.
7. **Falling Snow and Ice from Vehicles:** Snow and ice that accumulate on the top of vehicles can dislodge while driving, creating hazards for other drivers.

STATS

- Each year, approximately 562,182 vehicle crashes occur due to winter weather conditions in the USA. This accounts for about 21% of all vehicle crashes, which total nearly 5.9 million annually.
- On average, 138,735 motorists are injured in winter weather-related crashes each year in the USA. Additionally, over 116,800 people are injured in vehicle crashes specifically on snowy, slushy, or icy pavement annually.
- Winter weather contributes to approximately 1,705 fatalities each year in the USA, with around 900 deaths occurring during snowfall or sleet events.
- About 24% of weather-related crashes happen on snowy, slushy, or icy roads. These conditions significantly reduce vehicle maneuverability and increase stopping distances.
- During winter conditions, drivers often reduce their speeds by 30% to 40% on snowy or slushy roads, which can lead to longer travel times and increased crash risk due to reduced visibility and traction.
- The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) reports that, on average, over 1,300 people are killed and more than 116,800 are injured in vehicle crashes on snowy, slushy, or icy pavement annually in the U.S.

- 30% of all traffic accidents in Canada occur on snowy or icy roads. While specific data for the landscaping industry is not provided, this statistic is relevant to any industry involving frequent driving in winter conditions.