



AGRABILITY CHIT CHAT

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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As we move through the cluster of holidays this time of year, some of us travel but almost all of us are outside some time during the winter months. This month's issue includes such topics as winter driving, working, and dressing for safety against the cold. Since it's time to make our New Year's resolutions, you'll find a few suggestions for including among your other resolutions.

WINTER DRIVING

Although the following advice and ideas from ISU Extension and the ISU Department of Environmental Health & Safety were meant for everyone, they are especially important for individuals with mobility limitations.

Winter Vehicle Preparation

- ✓ Check battery and ignition system
- ✓ Check wipers, defroster, fluids, and lights, especially hazard lights
- ✓ Check exhaust, heater, and brakes

- ✓ Change oil to winter grade
- ✓ Check tires for tread and replace as needed with all season or snow tires
- ✓ Have a windshield scraper and broom

Avoid winter storm driving as much as possible. If you cannot, be prepared.

Winter Storm Driving Preparation

- ✓ Keep gas tank at least half full
- ✓ Remove ALL ice and snow from windows and lights (including taillights)
- ✓ Plan carefully using weather and road condition reports
 - Iowa Travel Info Source can be reached by dialing 800-288-1047 or 511 on cellular phones
 - Online information can be reached by visiting www.iowaroadconditions.org or www.511ia.org
- ✓ Travel, if possible, during daylight hours
- ✓ Do not travel alone
- ✓ Keep a supply of high energy bars and bottles of water in vehicle
- ✓ Have a cell phone or CB that you can use to summon assistance

Vehicle Survival Kit

- ✓ Flashlight and extra batteries
- ✓ First aid kit and pocket knife

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- ✓ Blankets or sleeping bags
- ✓ Plastic bags (for sanitation)
- ✓ Matches
- ✓ Extra mittens, socks, and wool cap
- ✓ Small shovel
- ✓ Booster cables
- ✓ Tire chains, traction mats, and a small sack of sand (DO NOT substitute clay cat litter for sand)
- ✓ Bright cloth to use as a flag
- ✓ Cell phone/CB

Winter Driving Rules

- ✓ Accelerate slowly
- ✓ Use caution with bridges and overpasses
- ✓ Follow other traffic at a greater distance
- ✓ Be aware – “Smooth and slow on ice and snow”
- ✓ Beware of “black ice” when road appears dry
- ✓ Pass with care
- ✓ Break and steer gently
- ✓ Use low beam or fog lights to increase visibility while driving in fog, rain, or snow
- ✓ Drive defensively at all times

Survival Strategies for Being Stranded on the Road

- ✓ Stay in car
- ✓ Hang a brightly colored cloth on radio antenna otherwise hang it out the window (be sure the window is completely closed after hanging the cloth out)
- ✓ Run the engine about 10 minutes out of each hour

- ✓ Turn both the heater and the dome light on while running the engine
- ✓ Keep the exhaust pipe clear of snow (if possible) or crack a window that is down wind
- ✓ Watch for frostbite, hypothermia, and dehydration
- ✓ Clap hands, move legs, or other exercise to keep from being in one position too long
- ✓ Huddle with the other person to maintain body heat and sleep in shifts
- ✓ Use whatever is needed to keep warm – newspapers, maps, floor mats, etc.
- ✓ Do not overexert by shoveling snow or pushing vehicle

WINTER WORKING

Many farmers and ranchers will be doing chores and working outside this winter regardless of the weather. However, working outside in cold weather conditions can be life threatening. Low temperatures and strong winds cause rapid cooling of exposed body surfaces of both humans and livestock. Any temperature is more chilling when a strong wind is present – this effect is called the wind-chill factor. As temperatures drop below freezing, a strong wind can create the same effect as a temperature nearly 50 degrees colder. Stockmen should also consider the effect of the wind-chill factor on unprotected livestock. (Dr. Steven Freeman, Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering, ISU)

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Wind Chill Factor Comparisons

Temperature (°F)	Effective Temperature (°F) with Wind		
	15 mph	30 mph	40 mph*
30	10	0	-5
20	-5	-20	-20
10	-20	-30	-35
0	-30	-50	-55
-10	-45	-65	-70
-20	-60	-80	-85
-30	-70	-95	-100
-40	-85	-110	-115

* Wind speeds > 40 mph have little additional chilling effect.

Little danger of fleshing freezing.

Flesh can freeze in 1 minute.

Flesh can freeze within 30 seconds.

If you must work outside during the winter, these tips for safe winter working are provided by the ISU Department of Environmental Health and Safety and Dr. Steven Freeman:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Plan ahead choosing your route and allowing extra time to reach destination ✓ Wear shoes or boots that provide traction ✓ Use the vehicle for support when entering or leaving it ✓ If you must walk on ice or snow | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Take short steps, shuffle ○ Bend slightly with center of gravity over feet ○ Prepare for falling by trying to land on thigh, hip, shoulder, not arms to limit injuries ✓ Remove snow, ice, and water from shoes/boots at destination ✓ Avoid overexertion. It strains your heart and causes more exhaustion ✓ Keep dry, changing wet clothing for dry as soon as possible ✓ Be alert for signs of frostbite |
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Symptoms of Cold Related Injuries

	Cold Response	Mild Frostnip	Superficial Frostbite	Deep Frostbite
Sensation	Painful	May have sensation	Numb	Numb
Feels	Normal	Normal	Soft	Hard
Color	Red	White	White	White

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WINTER DRESSING

Think in terms of layering when dressing to go outside this winter and, of course, be aware that “bundling up” may restrict some of your movements.

- ✓ Layer 1 (closest to your body) the best choice is synthetic fibers that pull moisture away from skin and dry quickly.
- ✓ Layer 2 is best composed of clothing made with wool or goose down and be comfortable, lightweight, durable, and waterproof.
- ✓ Layer 3 is the outside layer which should be appropriate to the activity while blocking wind and rain or snow.

Hats, gloves and footwear are also critical for outside safety in winter:

- ✓ Hats must cover the head well to prevent heat escaping the body.
- ✓ Gloves should be breathable and waterproof, but not constricting to hands or wrists. In extreme conditions, wear mittens because they keep hands warmer than gloves.
- ✓ Protect face and cover mouth to protect lungs.
- ✓ Footwear should consist of two layers of socks and shoes/boots. The sock closest to the body should be thin and made of synthetic fiber followed by a second layer of socks.
- ✓ Shoes/boots should be breathable and waterproof. Again, beware of constricting feet, ankles, and legs.

In addition to the above tips, hand and foot warmers can help to protect against frostbite. For those with amputations, additional coverings for stumps to provide insulation and to pull moisture away are recommended.

If you use an electric wheelchair or scooter, it is important to have an extra battery available since they do not retain a charge as well during cold weather. A car battery can work temporarily, but will not last as long as the one meant to be used in the wheelchair. If possible, have a manual wheelchair for backup.

Do you have hints you would like to share? Please feel free to send them to me either by email brndilee@iastate.edu or phone 1-515-294-8522 (Sherry Washburn).

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

Have you chosen your New Year's resolutions yet? If you would be willing to share your New Year's resolutions with me so that I can print them (anonymously, of course) in the January Chit Chat, please email me at brndilee@iastate.edu or call me at 1-515-294-8522 (Sherry Washburn).

Dr. Shinitzky, a psychologist in the department of pediatrics and adolescent medicine at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, has developed what he calls the SUCCESS plan, a series of steps to help people reach their goals. An article outlining the plan can be found at <http://www.lifescan.com/care/essentials/resolutions/> (If you cannot access this website and are interested in the information contained there, please let me know.)

WOMEN IN DENIM - A CONFERENCE FOR TODAY'S WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

A new kind of agricultural conference will be held on Jan. 14-15 in northwest Iowa. The conference, called Women in Denim, is geared towards women in agriculture. The purpose of the conference is to give women involved in agriculture, whether on the farm or working in the agricultural field, a chance

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to gather, network, relax and learn from one another.

The Women in Denim conference being held on the campus of Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, was initiated by two Northwest Iowa women in agriculture and organized through a planning committee including: Iowa State University Extension, Ag Partners LLC, Farm Service Agency, the Storm Lake Chamber of Commerce, Iowa Central Community College, Beulah Imming, Farm Credit Services of America, Sports Rehab and Physical Therapy Center, Buena Vista Regional Medical Center, and Iowa Natural Resource and Conservation Services.

Women attending this two-day event will have the opportunity to choose from more than 28 educational workshops ranging from grain marketing, selling over the Internet, and the Iowa wine industry to farmers markets, landscaping and how to pass the farm to the next generation.

For registration information call Ag Partners LLC at (800)-242-5022. Cost for the conference is \$25 until Dec. 30 and \$40 after that date.

FULL PARTICIPATION FOR ALL PETITION: You can make the American Dream possible for everyone

Too often people with disabilities are locked out, left out or overlooked.

While the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act addresses fundamental civil rights for people with disabilities, the basics of everyday life are still out of reach for too many Americans with disabilities:

- Getting an education
- Accessing healthcare
- Using public transportation
- Getting a job
- Finding housing
- Voting independently

Sign the Easter Seals online petition at www.easterseals.com/sign and make the American Dream accessible to people with disabilities. If you do not have access to the internet, you can contact Tracy Keninger at 515-289-1933 ext. 251.

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IOWA AGRABILITY - A joint effort of ISU Extension and the Rural Solutions Program of Easter Seals Iowa. The program can help farm family members with a disability stay in farming.

This newsletter from the Iowa AgrAbility Project will be sent monthly to AgrAbility families and other interested individuals. Please send comments and suggestions to:

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ISU Answerline at 1-800-262-3804

Web site: www.extension.iastate.edu/agrability/

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Iowa AgrAbility Project

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