

Blue Heron Pointe Winter Season Survival Guide





Your Winter Survival Guide

The winter season is upon us, which may mean snow, ice, sleet, rain and freezing temperatures. This time of year, it's nice to see snow blanketing the streets, trees and rivers, but it can also be dangerous if you're not careful.

With that in mind, the Blue Heron Board of Directors would like to share some of the best winter tips and resources so you may have an enjoyable and safe season. These tips come from the United States Navy safety center.





Blue Heron in Winter

Remember that all boats must be off of the water by November 30th each year and that all furniture and other items except your grill must be removed from the lower deck as well.

Potted flowers must be removed from all areas by the November 30th date as well.

Holiday decorations can be displayed from Thanksgiving until January 10th of each year.

No jet ski's can be parked externally on any driveway during the winter season.

All items described above that have to be stored by November 30th and be put back out on your deck on April 1st.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS





Winter, Your Car, and You

Driving in the winter means snow, sleet, and ice that can lead to slower traffic, hazardous road conditions, hot tempers and unforeseen dangers. To help you make it safely through winter, here are some suggestions from the National Safety Council to make sure that you and your vehicle are prepared.

Weather

No matter what the temperature, weather affects road and driving conditions and can pose serious problems. It is important to listen to forecasts on radio, TV, cable weather channel, or forecasts in the daily papers.

Your Car

Prepare your car for winter. Start with a checkup that includes:

- Checking the ignition, brakes, wiring, hoses and fan belts.
- Changing and adjusting the spark plugs.
- Checking the air, fuel and emission filters, and the PCV valve.
- Inspecting the distributor.
- Checking the battery.
- Checking the tires for air, sidewall wear and tread depth.
- Checking antifreeze level and the freeze line.
- Your car should have a tune-up (check the owner's manual for the recommended interval) to ensure better gas mileage, quicker starts and faster response on pick-up and passing power.



Winter, Your Car, and You

Necessary Equipment

An emergency situation on the road can arise at any time and you must be prepared. Following the tune up, a full tank of gas, and fresh anti-freeze, your trunk should carry:

- A properly inflated spare tire, wheel wrench and tripod- type jack
- A shovel
- Jumper cables
- Tow and tire chains
- A bag of salt or cat litter
- Tool kit

If You Become Stranded

- Do not leave your car unless you know exactly where you are, how far it is to possible help, and are certain you will improve your situation.
- To attract attention, light two flares and place one at each end of the car a safe distance away. Hang a brightly colored cloth from your antenna.
- If you are sure the car's exhaust pipe is not blocked, run the engine and heater for about 10 minutes every hour or so depending upon the amount of gas in the tank.
- To protect yourself from frostbite and hypothermia use the woolen items and blankets to keep warm.
- Keep at least one window open slightly. Heavy snow and ice can seal a car shut.
- Eat hard candy to keep your mouth moist.



Winter Driving

- Traffic jams, sudden storms and detours might mean that you have to spend much longer than you planned in your car. It can take two to three hours to drive as little as 15 miles on an icy road. Put together a winter-driving kit, including a pair of gloves, a warm hat, and a blanket.
- Carry a plastic bottle of sand mixed with rock-salt in the trunk of your car. If you get stuck on sheet ice, sprinkling some around the tire may provide traction. Some people fill up empty gallon paint cans with sand and replace the lids, instead of carrying bags of sand. Roofing shingles also work well.
- When the gas tank in your car gets to half full, fill it up. You never know when a massive traffic jam will snare you.
- If you're going out of town, let someone know where you're going and the estimated time of arrival at your destination. Make sure your cell phone is fully charged in case you have to make an emergency call.
- Pack an emergency kit including first-aid and prescription medications, bandages, and other first-aid necessities.
- Pack a car maintenance bag including cable jumpers, window scrapers, a bag of salt or cat litter, windshield wiper fluid, and other necessities to keep your car running in case you become stranded.

Driving In Snow and Ice

- Slow down. Triple the usual distance between your car and the one ahead.
- Stay in the plowed lane; avoid driving over the ridges between the plowed areas. If you must switch lanes, slow down, signal and move over slowly.
- Don't pass a snowplow or spreader unless it is absolutely necessary.
- Don't park along the street. Snowplow drivers can't fully clear a road if cars are in their way.
- If you skid, steer into the skid. If the back of your car is skidding to the left, for example, turn the steering wheel to the left.
- Don't pump your brakes, and avoid locking them up. If your brakes lock, take your foot off the brake pedal for a moment.



Winter Storms

- The hazards of winter storms are dramatic: wind-driven snow that makes it impossible to see, creates large drifts and lowers the wind chill.
- Blizzards and ice storms can knock down trees, utility poles and power lines. Even small amounts of ice are extremely hazardous to motorists and pedestrians.
- If you are stuck in a storm and are exposed to cold for an extended period, frostbite or hypothermia is possible and can be life-threatening.
- Advisories are issued by the National Weather Service (NWS) when the public should be alerted to possible storms. A winter storm watch is issued when severe winter conditions are possible within the next 12 to 48 hours. The NWS issues a winter storm warning when severe winter weather conditions are occurring or expected to occur within a few hours.
- Take action before a winter storm strikes.
- Check NOAA's [national weather service](#).
- "Winterize" your car with fresh antifreeze and a strong battery. Use snow tires. Keep a winter survival kit in your car.
- During a storm, listen to NOAA weather radio, local radio or television for the latest weather reports and emergency information.
- If you must be outside, wear plenty of layers of clothing. Don't over-exert yourself. Make sure you wear a hat, because the largest amount of body heat is lost through the top of the head.
- If you get stranded in your car, stay with it until help arrives. Do not try to walk for help during a blizzard.



Preparing for Power Outages

SAFETY ISSUES

- Purchase needed items for your home, office and car including: flashlights, batteries, AM/FM battery powered radio, rechargeable power failure lights, wind up or battery alarm clock, and light sticks.
- Have a 72-hour emergency kit for each family member.
- Keep cash and change on hand. In power failures ATMs may not work and you may need to make a phone call at a pay phone.
- Phones with answering machines and cordless phones are power dependent. Have at least one phone that does not require power in case you need to call 9-1-1. Keep your cell phone powered up.
- Familiarize yourself with your main electrical panel. You may have to turn off the main breaker or have to reset circuit breakers after an outage.
- If you use your fireplace for heat, be responsible! Don't burn wood with paint or stain. Do not leave an open flame. Make sure you close your fireplace screen to prevent sparks from flying. Do not store newspapers, kindling, or matches near the fireplace.
- If you use candles for lighting, place them on a fire proof surface.
- Make sure you have smoke detectors in appropriate rooms. Change the batteries regularly, preferably every 6 months, and test them monthly. If your smoke detectors are wired directly into the electrical system of your home they will not operate during a power failure unless the batteries are working. Special smoke detectors are available for people with hearing impairment.
- Have a fire extinguisher and know how to operate it. Have a fire evacuation plan and practice fire drills.
- During the power outage, unplug all small appliances and electronics to avoid damage from power surge. Leave one low wattage incandescent light on so you know when the power comes back on.
- When power comes back on you may have to reset your clocks, VCRs, microwave ovens, programmable thermostats, burglar and fire alarms.



Sledding and Tobogganing

Sliding downhill is an exhilarating winter sport. People of all ages can participate, and use all kinds of containers, from large toboggans to plastic disks or even cardboard boxes. But sledding unintentional injuries are surprisingly common despite snow's cushioning effect. Estimates of the number of injuries treated in hospital emergency rooms every year show about 33,000 sledding injuries and 1,500 from tobogganing.

Sledding injuries often include facial lacerations or skull fractures. Tobogganing injuries almost always involve the lower half of the body.

Children ages 5 to 9 are most susceptible to injury. Parents of young children should not let them sled alone. Older children should be taught to check for hazards.

The National Safety Council offers these guidelines for safe and fun sledding and tobogganing:

- Keep all equipment in good condition. Broken parts, sharp edges, cracks and split wood invite injuries.
- Dress warmly enough for conditions.
- Sled on spacious, gently sloping hills which have a level run-off at the end so that the sled can come to a halt safely. Avoid steep slopes and slopes located near streets and roadways.
- Check slopes for bare spots, holes and other obstructions which might cause injury. Bypass these areas or wait until conditions are better.
- Make sure the sledding path does not cross traffic and is free from hazards such as large trees, fences, rocks or telephone poles.
- Do not sled on or around frozen lakes, streams or ponds because the ice may be unstable.
- The proper position for sledding is to sit or lay on your back on the top of the sled, with your feet pointing downhill. Sledding head first increases the risk of head injury and should be avoided.
- Sledders should wear thick gloves or mittens and protective boots to protect against frostbite as well as potential injury.



Ice Skating Safety

- Ice skating is a fun winter activity, and also a great exercise! The National Safety Council offers these tips to help you and your family enjoy safe skating.
- Wear skates that fit comfortably and provide enough ankle support to keep you on your feet.
- Have the blades professionally sharpened at the beginning of each season.
- Skate only on specially prepared skating areas where you are sure the ice is strong enough to withstand your weight.
- Always check for cracks, holes and other debris.
- Before setting out on your skating expedition, learn basic skating skills, such as how to stop and fall safely.
- Wear warm clothing and rest when you become tired or cold.
- Never skate alone.



Hypothermia

- When your core body temperature falls suddenly below its normal level of 98.6 F, you are hypothermic. Skiers, hikers and fishermen are at risk, and this condition can occur unexpectedly, even on days when the temperature is 60 degrees. All it takes is wet clothes and a brisk breeze. Other factors can contribute, such as if you are hungry and tired, or if you've been drinking alcohol.
- You may not be aware of the condition, and others may not notice until your core body temperature has dropped dangerously low.
- To treat someone for hypothermia, gradually warm their body. Get them out of wet or cold clothing, and wrap them in layers of dry, warm clothing. Give them something warm to drink (avoid alcohol and caffeine).
- Don't move the victim unless staying put is even more risky or dangerous.
- To avoid hypothermia:
 - Wear clothes that are made of wool and that are windproof. In spite of advances in synthetic fibers, wool is still a superior insulator.
 - Wear loose garments that don't restrict your circulation.
 - Layers of light clothing are better than a heavy layer.
 - If you get wet, change into dry clothes.
 - Keep your hands, head, and feet covered--that's where your body loses the most heat.
- Pay attention to the forecast winds as well as the temperature when deciding what to wear.
- Symptoms vary depending on the severity of the chill. Victims of mild hypothermia often shiver uncontrollably and appear clumsy. Moderate hypothermia slurs their speech, appear dazed and act irrationally. Sometimes they don't feel cold. Victims of severe hypothermia have dilated pupils, pale skin, a slow pulse. Their muscles become rigid, and they eventually stop shivering. Ultimately, they collapse, and in the final stages, stop breathing.



Staying Warm

Prolonged exposure to low temperatures, wind and/or moisture can result in cold-related injury from frostbite and hypothermia. Here are some suggestions on how to keep warm and avoid frostbite and hypothermia.

Dress properly

- Wear several layers of loose-fitting clothing to insulate your body by trapping warm, dry air inside. Loosely woven cotton and wool clothes best trap air and resist dampness.
- The head and neck lose heat faster than any other part of the body. Your cheeks, ears and nose are the most prone to frostbite. Wear a hat, scarf and turtleneck sweater to protect these areas.

Frostbite: What to look for

- The extent of frostbite is difficult to judge until hours after thawing. There are two classifications of frostbite:
- Superficial frostbite is characterized by white, waxy or grayish-yellow patches on the affected areas. The skin feels cold and numb. The skin surface feels stiff and underlying tissue feels soft when depressed.
- Deep frostbite is characterized by waxy and pale skin. The affected parts feel cold, hard, and solid and cannot be depressed. Large blisters may appear after re-warming.

What to do

- Get the victim out of the cold and to a warm place immediately.
- Remove any constrictive clothing items that could impair circulation.
- If you notice signs of frostbite, seek medical attention immediately.
- Place dry, sterile gauze between toes and fingers to absorb moisture and to keep them from sticking together.
- Slightly elevate the affected part to reduce pain and swelling.
- If you are more than one hour from a medical facility and you have warm water, place the frostbitten part in the water (102 to 106 degrees Fahrenheit). If you do not have a thermometer, test the water first to see if it is warm, not hot. Re-warming usually takes 20 to 40 minutes or until tissues soften.
- **What not to do**
- Do not use water hotter than 106 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Do not use water colder than 100 degrees Fahrenheit since it will not thaw frostbite quickly enough.
- Do not rub or massage the frostbite area.
- Do not rub with ice or snow.



Artificial Logs for Fireplaces

- Make sure you open the damper before starting a fire. If you have any questions about whether it is open or clear, investigate with a flashlight before starting the fire.
- Burn one artificial log at a time, and don't add another until the first one is out. For most major brands, each log burns about three hours.
- Don't add wood or paper to the fire, and don't put an artificial log on a wood fire.
- Always use a grate and a fireplace screen.
- If you have a glass door on your fireplace, leave it open.
- Don't move, poke or break up an artificial log while it is burning. The flames can flare up to a surprising extent, and burning material can stick to the tongs or poker.
- If you need to extinguish an artificial log, use a Class B fire extinguisher, water or sand.
- Don't use artificial logs for open-flame cooking or barbecues.
- Keep an eye on the fire if children are around.
- Close the damper only when the ashes are cool.
- Have your chimney inspected (and cleaned, if necessary) regularly.
- Don't leave fires unattended.