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Driver Education Combined with Vehicle Technologies Can Ease Winter Driving, says National Safety Council and University of Iowa

MyCarDoesWhat explains features that help in snowy, icy and dark conditions

Itasca, Ill. and Iowa City, Iowa – December 1, 2015 – With winter weather upon us, the [National Safety Council](#) and the [University of Iowa](#) – creators of the [MyCarDoesWhat](#) campaign – are calling on drivers to learn the basics of winter driving before they hit the slippery and snowy roads. In 2013, 10,780 people were killed in car crashes between December and March. But, if drivers educate themselves on how to drive in snow and ice before they hit the roads, they will have the skills to stay safer on the roads this winter.

The *MyCarDoesWhat* campaign has the following tips for driving in wintry conditions:

- SLOW DOWN – This is the golden rule of winter driving. Drivers need to recalibrate and adjust their driving in the winter. Drivers frequently underestimate how long it takes to brake and steer on slippery roads.
- Do not use cruise control when driving on any slippery surface like ice and snow.
- Remember that bridges and overpasses freeze first.
- Always look and steer where you want to go.

While the driver is always a vehicle's best safety feature, many safety technologies can help prevent or reduce the severity of winter related crashes.

Technologies that can help you stay safe on the roads this winter include:

- Anti-lock braking systems (ABS): helps drivers steer in emergencies by restoring traction to tires. Contrary to popular belief, you should NOT pump the brakes when you have ABS—hold the brakes down firmly. They will buzz and vibrate when the ABS has activated.
- Traction control: helps you accelerate without spinning out on slippery surfaces like snow and ice.
- Electronic stability control: your car's computer helps sense when you may be losing control around a corner or curve by stabilizing your car when it begins to veer off your intended path.
- Adaptive headlights: adapts to changing roadway conditions - such as curves - to help illuminate the roadway during the long winter nights.

"Travel can be treacherous when roadway surfaces are compromised during winter storms," said Deborah A.P. Hersman, president and CEO of the National Safety Council. "The good news



is that in-vehicle technologies can help drivers by providing advance warnings and preventing loss of control.”

Researchⁱ shows most consumers are unsure about how many potentially life-saving vehicle safety technologies work, even those that have been standard for years like anti-lock braking systems. The *MyCarDoesWhat* campaign is designed to address that issue with videos and other consumer-friendly tools that help drivers have the skills to stay safe on the road. The campaign was launched by the National Safety Council and the University of Iowa.

“Driving in snow and ice requires much more focus on the conditions—and to adapt to an ever-changing, slippery environment,” said Daniel McGehee, director of the Transportation and Vehicle Safety Program at the University of Iowa. “Technologies like anti-lock braking systems, traction control and electronic stability control, can make a big difference in winter driving, but it’s important to remember to take it slow and avoid the roads when conditions are not ideal.”

For more information visit *MyCarDoesWhat.org* and follow *MyCarDoesWhat* on Twitter and Facebook.

About the National Safety Council

Founded in 1913 and chartered by Congress, the National Safety Council, nsc.org, is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to save lives by preventing injuries and deaths at work, in homes and communities, and on the road through leadership, research, education and advocacy. NSC advances this mission by partnering with businesses, government agencies, elected officials and the public in areas where we can make the most impact – distracted driving, teen driving, workplace safety, prescription drug overdoses and Safe Communities.

About the University of Iowa

The Transportation & Vehicle Safety Research Program at the University of Iowa works to improve technology design through a better understanding of how drivers perform and behave in crash situations. Their research-driven program works at the intersection of safety technology and public policy. The program’s areas of research include: human factors and human behavior, advanced in-vehicle safety technologies, driver distraction, teen driving, crash analysis and automated vehicle policy.

ⁱ According to the University of Iowa