

TOP 10 TIPS FOR ROAD USERS DURING A THAW

There is a danger that road users and particularly motorists may be lulled into a false sense of security as conditions improve after freezing conditions. As well as the obvious danger from lingering patches of snow and ice in sheltered areas, the roads during the thaw pose an additional set of challenges to road users.

The RSA has the following advice for road users;

1. Drivers need to be aware that grit residue from treated roads may remain on roads for a few days after a thaw. The obvious danger here is that it could create a hazard due to the risk of skidding on the grit. This is especially true on bends and in the centre of the road where a build up of grit usually occurs.
2. Remember that there may still be black ice lingering in sheltered spots and on bends and corners.
3. Be aware of the risk of thawing ice and slush build up at road sides.
4. Visibility will be reduced as spray from vehicles is thrown onto the windscreen of your vehicle. Keep an extra distance from the vehicle in front, especially goods vehicles, and ensure that your windshield washer is full. Keep your lights clear of grime and dirt.
5. Slow down as there may also be localised flooding as the thaw starts and this will increase the risk of aquaplaning.
6. Road surfaces may be damaged after the freeze / thaw action of the frost and ice. Motorists, especially cyclists and motorcyclists are advised to watch carefully for such hazards.
7. Motorists are asked to allow extra distance when passing cyclists and motorcyclists as they may have to take evasive action to avoid a hazard such as black ice or a pot-hole.
8. Slow down, keep an extra distance from the vehicle in front and expect the unexpected.
9. Road users, especially pedestrian's and cyclists should be aware of overhead hazards. Melting snow and ice falling from buildings and trees pose a serious risk. Be aware of what's happening above you and stay clear from the edges of buildings.
10. Slush, sand, grit, and ice-melting chemicals, as well as splattering all over windshields, also accumulates on the underside of cars, and accelerate corrosion. Wash your vehicle, particularly windscreens and lights. To minimise corrosion to your vehicle it is advisable to have the underside and wheel arches power washed/ sprayed at a car wash.

The RSA has prepared a helpful guide 'Severe Weather Advice for Road Users' which you can download from the RSA's website. It has lots more useful advice on dealing with the difficult road conditions in all kinds of severe weather.