

December 3, 2021

Winter Vehicle Risks & Fleet Safety

During the warm summer months, it can be easy to forget how cold the weather can get in the winter. As the beautiful snow flies and blankets our province, it's now that time to start to prepare your fleet for winter. Some basic risk avoidance techniques are helpful to ensure your vehicles are weather ready, such as changing the tires, having a crack-free windshield, and ensuring your staff have the proper items in the vehicles in the event something does happen.

Regulations state that a commercial tire is still acceptable if the tread depth above 1/8" on the steering tires and above 1/16" on the drive tires of a commercial vehicle. But this is a general rule and does not consider the age of a tire or the geography where the tire is mainly used.

Ozone cracking can begin to appear in tires in about three to four years depending on the manufacturer of the tire. Ozone cracking is the compromising of the sidewall of the tire due to exposure to the air over time. A compromised sidewall can lead to performance issues, especially if the vehicle is required to carry very heavy loads, such as a firetruck.

It is recommended that the tires for commercial vehicles be replaced within six years regardless of the amount of kilometres of use or amount of tread left. There are additional options to reduce cost, such as recapping. Some local suppliers may give a credit towards the purchase of new tires if the used tires can be repurposed for a vehicle that carries less load.

In addition to maintaining safe tires, we recommend that you have an emergency kit in all vehicles, especially those that go to more remote areas. Some essentials that can help in an emergency are a first aid kit, a warm blanket, a shovel, basic tools, and road safety items. Depending on where your journey takes you, you may also want to add additional survival items, such as food, water, rope, and more.

Winter adds many risks and your fleet is just one area to consider. Don't forget to also take the time and consider sidewalk safety, building security and winterizing, and driving policies. Did you know that your RiskPro credits can be used for winter tires, facility security, lighting, ice melt, and snow removal equipment? And your options aren't just limited to these, either – there are many ways to put your RiskPro credits to work for you. And if you choose to procure through the Canoe Procurement Group of Canada, you'll have access to cost-effective, trade-compliant contracts that allow you to make your credits go even further.

For any questions or more information, please contact our risk management team:

Helene Klassen
Risk Advisor

2510 Sparrow Drive
Nisku, Alberta T9E 8N5

OFFICE: 780.955.3639
FAX: 780.955.3615
RMAAlberta.com




BULLETIN

780.955.4078
helene@RMAinsurance.com

Lacey Barnhard

Risk Advisor

587.671.0108
lacey@RMAinsurance.com

A decorative graphic in the bottom right corner of the page. It features a black and white photograph of a large steel truss bridge spanning a river. The image is partially obscured by a yellow-to-orange gradient that sweeps across the bottom right corner of the page.

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