



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

Sheriff Curtis L. Landers
225 W. Olive Street
Newport, Oregon 97365
(541) 265-4277
Fax (541) 265-4926

TIP OF THE WEEK

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: September 26, 2024

Contact: Sheriff Curtis Landers
541-265-0652
lcsheriff@co.lincoln.or.us

DRIVING IN THE RAIN

Along with the official start of fall comes our rainy season. For some, driving in the rain, especially in the dark, causes anxiety. According to the [U.S. Department of Transportation](#), "nearly 5,700 people are killed and more than 544,700 people are injured in crashes on wet pavement" each year.

But being behind the wheel while it's raining doesn't have to be a nerve-racking experience. Here are some tips for driving in a downpour:

1. **Think.** Drivers need to stay alert and focused on what's going on around them, especially during rain and other stormy weather.
2. **Turn on headlights.** It's the law in all states to turn on headlights when visibility is low. Many states also require having headlights on when the windshield wipers are in use. While Oregon does not require motorists to turn on headlights when wipers are used, this can help increase visibility. Well-working wipers are an essential for driving in rain.
3. **Beware of hydroplaning.** Hydroplaning is what occurs when your tires are getting more traction on the layer of water on the road than on the road itself, resulting in your car sliding uncontrollably. It's easy enough to hydroplane: All you need is one-twelfth of an inch of water on the road and a speed of more than 35 miles per hour. If you start to hydroplane, let off the accelerator slowly and steer straight until you regain control. Before rain, snow, or freezing

temperatures begin, it is important to have quality tires for increased traction and safety.

4. **Turn off cruise control.** On rain, snow, ice, or other slick surfaces, cruise control may cause you to lose control. If you hydroplane while in cruise control, your car will actually go faster.
5. **Slow down.** Speed limits are designed for ideal conditions. That means driving when there is little traffic and good visibility. Plan for more time to get to your destination when it is raining.

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