

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Want to Stay Safe on the Roads This Winter?

Health Unit Reminds Drivers to Plan Ahead and Be Prepared

National Safe Driving Week Begins December 1

Tuesday, November 30, 2010, Peterborough

With winter weather around the corner, the Peterborough County-City Health Unit is reminding drivers of the two main precautions they can take to stay safe on the roads this season: plan ahead and be prepared.

“Motor vehicle collisions continue to cause a high number of injuries each year in our area, and drivers who plan ahead and prepare themselves for difficult driving conditions can reduce their risk of an incident,” said Jackie Donaldson, Health Promoter for the Health Unit’s Injury Prevention Program. “With increased travel during the holiday season, drivers need to think about the changes they can make to ensure the roads are safer for everyone. This is especially important because collision rates are higher in winter than for other times of the year.”

December 1 to 7 is also National Safe Driving Week, an annual public awareness campaign of the Canada Safety Council (CSC). The CSC encourages drivers to take added precautions throughout the winter months, including:

1. Planning ahead and allowing more time to get to your destination
2. Being prepared. This includes:
 - **Adjust your driving habits to be consistent with weather conditions:** Leave three seconds between your car and the car you are following, more in bad weather. To do this, find a marker, like a tree or sign post ahead. When the vehicle in front of you passes it, start counting. You should not reach that same marker before you have counted three seconds.
 - **Maintain your vehicle for optimum performance:** Get a complete vehicle

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tune-up in the fall to prepare for winter and check all systems: exhaust, fuel, heating and cooling, as well as brakes, lights, batteries, tires, windshield wipers and fluid.

- **Equip your vehicle with necessary safety items:** Have an emergency car kit on hand. It should include: ice scraper and brush, shovel, gritty substance such as sand or kitty litter, booster cables, flashlight, antifreeze and extra washer fluid. As well as warm blankets, fresh water, matches, first aid kit, and a well-charged cell phone. An inflated spare tire, wheel wrench and tire jack should already be there.

For more information about safe driving in winter months, please visit the Canada Safety Council website at: <http://safety-council.org/campaigns/national-safe-driving-week-2010/> .

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For further information, please contact:

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