

Ingozi - imvula iyesa **Beware** the rain is here

Please
Reduce Speed
When Wet

80 km/h

Wet Weather driving tips

Prepare:

1. Keep a cloth in the cab to clean windows and lights.
2. Make sure the wiper blades are good in condition. Check regularly, as well as check electrical connections to the wiper motor.
3. Keep soap in the windscreen cleaning water to help remove bugs.
4. Make sure the tyres have enough tread to cope with wet weather.
5. Make sure tyres are always properly inflated.
6. Make sure the demister is working properly.

Hazards:

Rain always brings a variety of dangerous issues:

1. Visibility is reduced.
2. The less tread on the tyres the greater the risk of skidding.
3. Traction between the road and tyres is reduced - this is true even for brand new tyres!
4. Safety margins are reduced even in light showers.
5. The type of road surface affects the levels of grip. Roads with a rough surface are much safer and easier to drive on than roads worn smooth by years of use.
6. Road markings and manhole covers become very slippery when wet.

Safety Tips

1. **Slow down.** Drive according to the road conditions and your own driving ability.
2. Allow for longer stopping distances.
3. Always keep both hands on the steering wheel.
4. Drive smoothly and avoid harsh braking.
5. Avoid driving through puddles - there may be a deep pothole beneath the surface.
6. If you have to drive through high water, drive slowly in low gear holding the steering wheel steady.
7. After driving in heavy rain for some time, lightly apply the brakes to dry them off.
8. **Be visible** – turn on your head and fog lights.
9. **ABS:** Many modern trucks are fitted with an anti-lock braking system allowing the driver to maintain steering control under heavy and dangerous braking conditions such as in ice and rain. ABS helps, should the vehicle start skidding in wet and icy weather or even start hydroplaning. If you do not know how to use the ABS ask your driver trainer or vehicle supplier for advice!
10. If your vehicle does not have ABS use your brake pedal to slow down as fast as possible without locking the wheels up.
11. **Gravel Roads:** In rainy and wet weather gravel roads represent a significant safety hazard, particularly to drivers not familiar with such driving conditions. Truck drivers are warned that gravel roads become dangerously slippery in wet weather and are easily washed away. A lack of drains means water collects in pools or ends up making running streams in the road. Always keep both hands on the steering wheel when driving on a gravel road.
12. **Be prepared** – carry a cell phone/ have emergency numbers to summon help if needed.

Hydroplaning:

Hydroplaning means a wedge of water has built up in front of the tyre and, if you drive too fast, the tyres begin spinning on the surface of the water. This is a terrifying situation and something truck drivers want to avoid at all costs.

Prevention

1. Slow down when it starts to rain. High speed is the number one cause of hydroplaning and slower speeds can help you avoid the issue before it arises.
2. Rotate your tyres and replace them when the tread becomes worn. Treads are supposed to shunt water away from the wheels - once they wear down you are more likely to lose control.
3. At the first sign of rain turn off the cruise control.

Handle the problem

If your vehicle starts hydroplaning the following tips may help:

1. Take your foot off the accelerator as soon as you feel the vehicle hydroplaning. This is a lot safer than slamming on the brakes which, in a non ABS-equipped truck, could send you into a deadly spin.
2. Turn in the direction you are drifting. This helps you to get maximum grip from all the wheels. If you need to avoid an obstacle tap the brakes gently and try and steer around the object.
3. Wait until you can feel the road again beneath your truck and proceed with caution.



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