Driving Safely In Storms

Practice common sense when driving in a dust storm or heavy rain. When weather conditions worsen, slow down and allow more space between you and the car ahead.

Per the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA), tire pressure should be checked on all tires, including the spare, at least once a month or before going on long trips. Due to the extreme heat Arizona experiences in the summer months, it is recommended that air pressure be checked once a week.

Dust Storms

• Avoid dust storms if possible. "Pull Aside, Stay Alive."
• Turn headlights on and slow to a prudent speed.
• If you pull off the road, move as far right as possible. Turn off the car and headlights, and set the parking brake. Remove your foot from the brake, or other drivers may think you're a car in motion.
• If conditions prevent pulling off the road, proceed at a reduced speed. In this case, turn the headlights on and use the center line as a guide. **Never stop on the pavement.**

Heavy Rain

• Rain reduces traction and causes tires to hydroplane. Slow your speed accordingly.
• Water on roads may be deeper than it looks. Watch for vehicles traveling too fast; they can throw blinding sheets of water.
• Don't cross rain-swollen washes. You could be caught in a flash flood that can sweep your vehicle and its contents away.
• Control of a vehicle is lost in 6 inches of water. Most vehicles begin to float in 2 feet of water.

Pay attention to hazard signs and roadblocks. Ignoring them threatens life and property and can result in police action. Arizona has a "Stupid Motorist Law" that provides for recovery of the costs associated with rescuing a driver who avoids a roadblock and gets stuck in a flooded street.

If You're Stuck in a Wash

• Call 9-1-1.
• Climb onto the roof of your vehicle and wait to be rescued.
• If water is still low, wade to safety, but beware of floating debris.

Be Informed

To check road restrictions and closures, dial 5-1-1 or visit www.az511.gov.

(Source: Arizona Department of Public Safety, Arizona Department of Transportation, City of Phoenix)