

# Prepare well for winter conditions

TOPEKA — A holiday or New Year’s trip to Grandma’s house can be a highlight of the year for your family.

Getting there safely should be at the top of your trip-preparation list, especially when winter weather has gripped the area, says Kansas Insurance Commissioner Sandy Praeger.

Commissioner Praeger said the same emphasis on safety is also important at home during a winter storm.

“The following suggestions, gathered from several sources, could help you make it safely through either winter scenario,” she said.

On the road:

- Keep your car in top operating condition, a good rule of thumb year-around. Have it checked by a mechanic before your winter trip. Check all the vitals: brakes, battery, fluid levels, tire pressure, tire tread, windshield wipers and light bulbs, among others. Consult your owner’s manual to see if the vehicle’s current mileage requires any scheduled maintenance.
- If you have a long drive, and the weather is unsettled, make sure you have emergency equipment: a first-aid kit, flashlights, a battery-powered radio, blankets, drinking water, snacks, a shovel, jumper cables, ice scrapers, ex-

tra cash or credit cards, sleeping bags, facial tissues and paper towels, a tow rope, layered clothing, bright-colored flag material and a sack of sand or cat litter.

- Get plenty of sleep.
- Have a fully-charged cell phone — and pack your vehicle phone-charging unit.
- Make sure all passengers wear seat belts.
- Keep the gas tank at least half full all the time.
- Let someone at your destination know your timetable.
- Don’t assume the posted speed is safe under anything but dry, clear conditions. On snow or ice, traction for your tires is only from one-half to one-tenth as great as on dry pavement.
- Clear any snow away from the heater inlets (usually at the base of the windshield).
- Be alert for deer near roadways, especially at dawn and dusk.

If you are in an accident: Call the police or highway patrol; obtain names, phone numbers, insurance-policy numbers and addresses of those involved, as well as any witnesses; record the time, date, location and road conditions; and take notes each time you talk to an insurance company, agent or others involved in the situation.

At your house:

- If you ride out a winter storm at home, here are some useful tips, courtesy of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Emergency Preparedness Web site:
- If the temperature plummets, open the cabinets under sinks in your kitchen and bathrooms to allow heated indoor air to circulate around the pipes.
- Let faucets drip, but don’t run a big stream of water.
- Have a week’s worth of food and safety supplies, such as bottled drinking water, canned/no-cook food, a nonelectric can opener, baby food and formula (if you have an infant in the household), prescription drugs and other medicine, a first-aid kit, ice melt pellets, flashlights, batteries, a battery-powered radio and lanterns.
- Avoid using candles for lighting, and never leave lit candles unattended.
- If you have a fireplace, check your supply of dry firewood.
- Don’t use a portable generator or appliances if they are wet.

If you have a household insurance claim from weather problems, call your agent or company promptly. If possible, take photos or videos of any damage. Call the Kansas Insurance Department Consumer Assistance Hotline, (800) 432-2484, if you have a question or problem with the claim.

You can also download our brochure “Before and After the Storm: Insurance Tips for Preparation and Recovery” from our Web site, [www.ksinsurance.org](http://www.ksinsurance.org), or receive it in the mail by calling the hotline number.

“Being prepared for a winter trip or a homebound situation can save you time, money, frustration, and possibly your life and the lives of your loved ones,” Praeger said. “A little extra planning is worth it.”

## Marijuana gift not delivered

JOPLIN, Mo. (AP) — Some people didn’t get the Christmas presents they were expecting.

Missouri troopers seized about 20 pounds of marijuana from a car last week — some of it in luggage, and some in boxes wrapped as Christmas gifts.

The Highway Patrol says troopers found the marijuana in a car they stopped for speeding on Interstate 44 near Joplin.

Two California women in the car gave troopers permission to search the vehicle. Both were charged Tuesday with one marijuana-related count and released.

## On the Beat

**COLBY POLICE**  
**Monday**

2:41 a.m. — Motorcycle accident in the parking lot at 265 W. Fourth. Ambulance paged.

2:50 a.m. — Driving under the influence, report on file.

10:11 a.m. — Possible dog abuse reported.

12:19 p.m. — Subject fell at Dil-lons, requested ambulance.

2:07 p.m. — Accident at high school.

2:19 p.m. — Kids on ice at at Villa High Pond. Spoke to them.

6:27 p.m. — Item missing from Quality Inn lost or stolen. Report filed.

7:27 p.m. — Arrested Keith Kud-er on warrant.

8:47 p.m. — Arrested Joseph Harper on warrant.

9:30 p.m. — Walmart manager reported employee stealing medication.

**Tuesday**

9:18 a.m. — Walk through at Sacred Heart School.

11:07 a.m. — Jim Miner called about item left at Travel Shoppe. Spoke to clerk, said nothing left there; called reporting party back.

12:36 p.m. — Pete Ziegelmeier reported BB shot in window at High Plains Co-op office.

8:46 p.m. — Assisted Highway Patrol with accident on I-70 at mile 54.

10:04 p.m. — Caller hit parked trailer on Hill and Country Club.

11:47 p.m. — Officer needed at 105 E. Walnut about domestic that occurred earlier in the night.

**THOMAS COUNTY SHERIFF**  
**Tuesday**

12:10 p.m. — Possession with intent report for traffic stop on I-70 mile 57 eastbound.

6:17 p.m. — Deer in roadway at K-25 five miles north of town. Animal moved off roadway.

8:46 p.m. — Four deputies assisted Kansas Highway Patrol at mile 54 with injury accident.

9:21 p.m. — Spoke with bipolar subject on Greyhound who was upset about accident and wanting ambulance. Everything OK.

9:40 p.m. — Caller hit guardrail on I-70 mile 53.

9:40 p.m. — Rollover on I-70 mile 43.

9:44 p.m. — Assisted Kansas Highway Patrol with injury accident at mile 54.

10:31 p.m. — Assisted Highway Patrol in obtaining driver information at Bosselman’s for accident on I-70 mile 61.5 westbound.

10:38 p.m. — Car with flashers between miles 50 and 51 on I-70. Everything OK, ran out of gas; Taylor Motors enroute.

11:44 p.m. — Caller slid off into ditch around mile 63 eastbound on I-70. Unable to locate until 12:44 a.m. at mile 71 eastbound; got subject out.

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