



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

STAYING SAFE ON OUR ROADS AS THE SEASONS CHANGE

PATTY RITCHIE October 19, 2015



If you've lived in Upstate New York for any period of time, you know that weather changes the way we do things—specifically, the way we drive. And, while most people might think winter is the only season that is difficult for drivers, fall—with its back-to-school traffic, fog, rain and changing hours of daylight—presents challenges too.

As fall continues, here are some tips for staying safe on the roads:

Lookout for leaves: Leaves on the road have the potential to cover things like bumps or potholes. If you're traveling on a roadway covered with leaves, be sure to exercise extra

caution. Also, it goes without saying that you should never drive through a leaf pile, as they often times are places where children like to play.

Be careful in foggy conditions: Fall can be a damp season, and as a result it can also be extremely foggy. When driving through fog, set your lights on low beam, which will aim your light downward toward the road. Going along with fog is often times rain, so you'll also want to make sure your windshield wipers are working properly and, if you're driving on a water covered roadway, drive slow so you don't hydroplane.

Keep an eye on your tire pressure: We're all familiar with mornings that start out chilly and end up being sunny, warm fall days. The change in temperature can cause your tires to lose air pressure, so keep an eye on yours to make sure they are inflated to the proper specifications.

Be ready for changes in daylight: With the end of daylight savings time comes less daylight hours and more darkness. Make sure you're alert during times of reduced visibility and also give your vehicle's lights a once over to ensure they're clean and in good working condition.

Prepare for the season ahead: The most challenging driving season isn't far off, so it's a good idea to take steps now to prepare. Make sure you take steps to winterize your vehicle and don't forget to stock it with cold weather items—like a thermal blanket, flashlight and emergency kit—just in case you find yourself stranded when the snow starts to fly.

It's important to practice safe driving every day, but it's especially important during seasons—like fall and winter—that present extra challenges. Whether you're taking a drive to enjoy the foliage or making a trip to the apple orchard, I hope you'll keep these tips in mind to ensure you arrive at your destination safely as the season continues.