

Hall County Officials Advise Caution In Light Of Severe Weather Threat

January 24, 2013

The National Weather Service has issued a Winter Storm Warning for the Gainesville/Hall county area, indicating that we could see a mix of freezing rain and sleet between the hours of 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. Friday. Hall County Government is advising all residents and employees to exercise extreme caution in the event that our area experiences severe weather.

Hall County Government employees and residents can check local media outlets and hallcounty.org to find any notices about closures or delayed openings if the situation merits such action.

If you must travel, be mindful not only of the ice that you can see on the roadways, but be especially aware of "black ice" that is not immediately noticeable. The numerous bridges and overpasses in our area are all prime areas for this to occur. With that in mind, the Hall County Sheriff's Office offers the following driving safety tips:

DECREASE your speed. Higher speeds naturally decrease the time you'll have to react to a problem, in addition to worsening the effects of a collision.

INCREASE your distance. Slick roadways are very unforgiving to sudden braking. Maintain enough distance between your car and the vehicle ahead to avoid a collision if you start to slide.

DON'T PANIC if you do start to slide. Gently apply the brake, and if your vehicle begins to slip to one side or the other, turn into the direction of the slide.

FOCUS on the task of driving. Leave the phone in your pocket and give your full attention to the road. Distracted driving is dangerous at any time, but especially when roadways are slick.

WEAR YOUR SEATBELT. The chances of a collision are much greater during inclement weather. Increase the odds that your car will be the only thing requiring repair by wearing your seatbelt.

BE PREPARED. If you find that you must travel, be ready to deal with a roadside emergency. Be sure to have a full tank of gas, a fully charged mobile phone, adequate clothing for the conditions, a flashlight with fresh batteries, and a small amount of food and water. Emergency crews will be very busy and it could take some time to reach you if you become stranded.

To keep the roadways as safe as possible, Hall County Road Maintenance personnel have prepared spreader trucks and snow plows to deal with any problem areas that may be created by the inclement weather. In addition, Hall County's supply of snow and ice material, including calcium chloride, is fully stocked and on hand if needed. Maintenance crews will be monitoring roads and bridges as the temperature drops and precipitation continues. Those crews will remain on call until the threat of inclement weather subsides.

Anyone wishing to report trouble on the roadways should call Hall County dispatch at (770) 536-8812.