



PARKING LOT SAFETY

Wintertime Parking – Safety Tips

Source: Keenan & Associates

Parking lots can be dangerous at any time of the year but especially in winter months when roadways and parking lots are covered with snow and ice. Dangerous equipment such as snowplows and other vehicles can cause severe injury – even death.

It is very common for drivers to lose their focus and let their guard down when they pull into and out of the parking lot at work. Workers are at increased risk of slip, trip, and fall accidents, but this risk is dramatically increased in winter months when parking lots and walkways are icy and slick. Approximately 20% of insurance claims are related to parking lot accidents. Due to limited visibility, distractions, and the lack of being able to hear clearly, employees may not see or hear hazards around them while entering or exiting their vehicle.

Several things can distract a driver when getting into or out of their vehicle, such as fiddling with their phone, keys, radio, or personal items. Sometimes, these actions are done while the car is moving, which compounds the risk of accident and injury because they may not see pedestrians, moving equipment such as a snowplow, or other vehicles. When there is inclement weather, these distractions and hazards are much more dangerous and hazardous.

Below are several wet weather parking lot safety tips to follow:

- Make sure you have put your car in park before getting your items and yourself ready to exit your car.
- When walking in the parking lot, stay to the sides of the aisle and watch for cars or equipment.
- Make eye contact with approaching vehicles and stop if you are unsure if they see you.
- Wear boots or nonslip shoes with good ankle support. If necessary, carry your normal work shoes inside to change.
- Snow can muffle sounds, and electric/hybrid vehicles are very quiet. Make sure you are alert, looking around, and not solely relying on hearing vehicles around you.
- Look out for snow removal equipment at all times.
- Do not talk on or use your cell phone/wireless devices while in the parking lot.
- Inspect the area around your car before entering the vehicle.
- Make adjustments to your seat, mirrors, etc. before you pull your car out of the parking space.
- Use your seat belt every time you get into your vehicle.
- Obey parking lot speed limits and marked lane areas; do not cut across the parking lot. Obey all parking lot stop signs.
- Do not take shortcuts over snowdrifts or plowed snow.

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