

Date: 20th December 2012



PRESS RELEASE

Flooding and Driving Advice for Motorists

With further heavy rain forecast this evening and over the weekend, motorists across the region are being urged to take care and exercise caution. A number of flood alerts have been issued by the Environment Agency and they are warning drivers to be aware of surface water, potential flooding and disruption to travel.

The Safer Roads Partnership in Warwickshire and West Mercia is advising motorists to take extra care when out on the roads this Christmas. If driving through larger puddles or smaller areas of standing water, drive slowly and steadily, allow oncoming traffic to pass and always test your brakes after leaving the water.

If water has flooded across a section of road it may be difficult to tell exactly how deep it is. If you do come across a road that is flooded **DO NOT** attempt to drive through the flood water. This not only has the potential to put yourself and other people in serious danger, it could also damage your vehicle; as little as an egg cup of water entering your engine is enough to wreck it.

Visibility can also be seriously reduced in heavy rain so headlights **MUST** be used, together with allowing a bigger gap between you and the car in front to allow for the increased stopping distance. If you are unlucky enough to breakdown in heavy rain, advice from the AA is to try and get the car to a safe and visible place, call for roadside assistance and wait for help to arrive.

Anna Higgins from the Safer Roads Partnership said: "We are urging all motorists to exercise caution in adverse weather conditions, use common sense and follow our simple advice. Localised flooding still exists in places and the current forecast is predicting more of the same so our advice is to stay alert to local weather and news reports and if your area is experiencing flooding it's advisable to leave any non essential travel until it has subsided."

Members of the public can sign up to flood advice from the Environment Agency by visiting their website (www.environment-agency.gov.uk) or calling 0845 988 1188.

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If you would like to arrange an interview with a spokesperson please contact Anna Higgins on 01905 331248.

Notes to Editors:

The Safer Roads Partnership is part of West Mercia Police and works in partnership with the four local highway authorities in West Mercia (Herefordshire Council, Shropshire Council, Telford & Wrekin Council and Worcestershire County Council); the Highways Agency; HM Courts Service - West Mercia; the two Fire & Rescue Services for Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire; and West Mercia Cluster of Primary Care Trusts.