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RAC issues warning to drivers as cold snap arrives

The RAC is issuing a warning to drivers to brace themselves for a bout of wintry weather arriving from tomorrow (Friday), with the number of incidents attended by its orange patrols this coming weekend expected to be up significantly on what is normal for early December.

Call-outs on Sunday 10 December, when the worst of the weather is predicted, are expected to be up nearly 9% on what is usually anticipated at this time of year with the RAC planning for around 7,200 breakdowns – which equates to five vehicles needing rescuing every minute. Anticipated breakdowns on Saturday and into the early part of next week are also due to be up on the seasonal norm but by a smaller percentage.

Between Friday and end of Monday, the RAC is expecting to attend in the region of 33,000 breakdowns in total compared to the 29,000 that are normal for the second weekend of December:

Friday 8 December	8,500 breakdowns – 1.3% up on the seasonal norm
Saturday 9 December	7,400 breakdowns – 2% up on the seasonal norm
Sunday 10 December	7,200 breakdowns – 8.7% up on the seasonal norm
Monday 11 December	10,000 breakdowns – 3.6% up on the seasonal norm

The RAC has published [a comprehensive guide to driving in wintry conditions](#) and is recommending drivers check over their vehicle before setting out to cut the likelihood of them breaking down in the cold and wet. It is also reminding drivers to ‘slow down, make space, and move on’ past other

breakdowns to help guarantee the safety of roadside workers who will be operating in very cold and difficult conditions. A campaign was launched last week to raise awareness of the risks that roadside workers subject themselves to following a spate of accidents in 2017 involving RAC patrols and its contractors.

RAC director of roadside operations James Knight said: “The end of this week and into the weekend will see an arctic blast sweep across the country, with snow for many of us, but our roadside patrols are well prepared and will be working around the clock to assist our members who find themselves in difficult situations.

“There is a lot drivers can do right now to be prepared for the wintry conditions which can drastically reduce the chances of them breaking down in the cold. This includes checking the condition of their car’s tyres – snow and ice mean grip is more important than ever – as well as making sure windscreen wipers and all lights are functioning properly to ensure they have a clear view of the road ahead. Having enough screenwash is also vital to clearing the windscreen of dirt and grit.

“As it is going to be cold everywhere, we also recommend motorists put together a kit that can help keep themselves and their passengers safe and comfortable if they are unlucky enough to have their car fail on them. This should include some spare warm clothes and blankets, food and drink, high visibility jackets, a first aid kit, a torch and spare batteries. Also make sure that mobile phones for all occupants are fully charged so you can easily call for help if you need to.

“The message to drivers when out on the road over the next few days is to stay safe. Build in more time for your journey and think twice before driving longer distances if the journey isn’t really essential. Before you set out, thoroughly clear your windscreen and roof of snow and ice, make sure the windscreen is completely demisted, and switch on your headlights.

“We are also calling on drivers to take particular care when they are passing breakdown patrols and other roadside workers. Following an accident involving an RAC member and a patrol on the M4 at the end of last month, we are asking everyone to slow down, make space and move on past any incidents they come across to safeguard roadside workers who are literally putting their lives at risk to get motorists out of difficult situations.”

For more tips and advice on getting ready for winter on the road, visit www.rac.co.uk/drive/advice/winter-driving.

Contacts



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