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Hydroplaning

On wet pavement, tires can actually lose contact with the road. This sudden loss of control can send you into a dangerous skid. This phenomenon is known as “hydroplaning.”

Why Hydroplaning Occurs

As your vehicle rolls along on wet pavement a layer of water builds up ahead of the front tires. When the tire treads can no longer disperse this water, the wheels are lifted up in much the same way water lifts a skier.

The danger of hydroplaning is always present on wet or slushy roads. You can drive along for miles on the verge of a skid without being aware of it.

Hydroplaning occurs at virtually all speed ranges depending on conditions. As you increase the speed of your car the chances of hydro-planing become greater. Speeds in excess of 50 mph on wet pavement are considered to be in the “extreme danger zone.”

How To Prevent Hydroplaning

Here are some suggestions for wet weather driving.

1. Reduce speed.
2. Allow extra distance for stopping.
3. Drive in the tracks of the vehicle in front of you.
4. Avoid deep water and puddles—they substantially increase the danger of hydroplaning.
5. Replace badly worn tires.
6. Drive with the tires inflated to the manufacturer’s specifications.

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