



Caution: Winter Weather Ahead

By Lt. David C. Buckley
Troop K, Skippack

With winter weather approaching, many kids may be anticipating the fun of frolicking in the snow. However, for drivers, snow and ice bring a whole different set of driving difficulties and responsibilities. One related task that no one looks forward to is the process of scraping ice and removing snow from our vehicles, which seem to get covered with ice and snow at the most inopportune times.

How many times have you seen a driver (maybe even you) peering out through only a small section of the windshield or rear window that has been scraped clear of ice and snow? Driving a vehicle that is covered with ice and snow is not only dangerous but also illegal. Drivers may not be able to see other vehicles, pedestrians, or traffic hazards because of sight lines that are restricted by ice and snow on the windows and windshield.

Section 4524 of the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code specifically addresses clearing ice and snow from the windshield, side wings, and rear window of a vehicle.

Section 4524(a), in part, reads as follows: No person shall drive any motor vehicle with any **ice or snow** on the front windshield which materially obstructs, obscures, or impairs the driver's clear view of the highway or any intersecting highway.

Section 4524(b), in part, reads as follows: No person shall drive a motor vehicle with any sign, poster, or other nontransparent material, **including ice or snow**, upon the side wings or side or rear windows of the vehicle which materially obstructs, obscures, or impairs the driver's clear view of the highway or any intersecting highway.

Although the fine assessed for a violation of Section 4524 is \$25.00, the related court costs bring the grand total for a violation of Section 4524 to \$109.50. If receiving a citation and paying the related fine is not motivation enough for clearing your vehicle of ice and snow, think of the carnage and costs related to a traffic crash caused by a failure to clear ice and snow.

When winter weather is approaching, plan ahead, and take the time necessary to properly clear your vehicle of ice and snow. A few extra moments ensuring your vehicle is in safe driving condition is one small act that can make everyone's winter a season to enjoy.

If you want to learn more, the full text of Pennsylvania's Vehicle Code can be found on-line at http://www.dmv.state.pa.us/vehicle_code/index.shtml.

Drive safely.

