

## Tunnel Vision Drivers

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So you awake to face another winter morning. You know how it goes, you take care of washing up, brushing what needs to be brushed, throwing down something edible so you can check off “eat healthy breakfast” from your to-do list and then you march out to your car. If you’re among the lucky ones, it may be just a matter of opening the garage door and heading out....but perhaps you’re not so lucky and you’re staring at a large, four-wheeled ball of ice. Okay you start the engine, turn on the heater, the defroster, dig around for an ice scraper or snow brush and you get to work on de-icing your vehicle. Here’s the critical question: How thorough are you going to be?

Chances are it depends on how you are doing on your daily schedule. If you have time, perhaps all snow and ice are cleared from all surfaces. If you’re running late, maybe you’ve taken shortcuts on the task. Don’t! It’s better to be late than to drive in a rolling tunnel!

Yes it may be understandable, but failing to spend time to properly clear ice and snow from your car, truck, or van is a true losing situation. Driving is, under the best of circumstances, perilous. To minimize the dangers, you need to be able to clearly see traffic. You also have a responsibility to operate your vehicle in a way that makes it safer for other drivers. Clearing a small patch of windshield and hitting the road causes problems.

It is impossible for a driver to have an adequate field of vision to safely operate a car when only a portion of a vehicle’s windows are clear. At best you’re only able to see what is directly in front; but you drive in a 360 degree world and dangers surround you. Winter driving also means tricky, slick road surfaces. If you lose control of your car, substantially limiting your view dangerously reduces your ability to handle the emergency. And let’s point out another problem.

That snow and ice you leave on your vehicle acts quite predictably when you’re moving along the road. It is subjected to wind and that causes additional eddies of snow that can obscure the view of nearby drivers. Worse, chunks of hardened snow or ice can be dislodged and either damage other vehicles directly or cause traffic accidents.

The increased danger posed by drivers who neglect to properly clean off their cars has prompted some safety officials to pull cars over and issue tickets. Some areas have specific fines, treating the situation as public endangerment.

Yes, it’s cold, yes you’re in a hurry, yes it’s a pain to brush and scrape ice and snow, but do it. The inconvenience isn’t worth the consequences.....the possibly deadly consequences of driving with tunnel vision.

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