

Vol. 7, No. 1, fall-winter 2005-2006

DRIVING

in *Québec*

Be prepared for winter
HELPFUL HINTS

Be courteous
**WHAT GOES AROUND
COMES AROUND!**

A vehicle is stolen
every 13 minutes
**HOW TO OUTSMART
THE THIEVES?**



Road



Info?

to find out about road conditions, road works and to obtain general information; and to report incidents on the road network, make comments and submit complaints.

Contact Inforoutière

All the information you need to plan trips on the Québec road network is available through a single telephone number and a single Web site.



L'Inf routièrè

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ou #0511

Transports Québec 



MESSAGE FROM THE PUBLISHER

It's coming soon, very soon. Days of dazzling brightness, invigorating air and rosy cheeks, but freezing rain, snow, blizzards and changing road conditions. In short, winter is back, along with another edition of *Driving in Québec*.

As usual, you will find helpful hints for starting the season on a positive note, in total safety. After all, the safety of all road users is our raison d'être. Whether you're a motorist, a pedestrian or a snowmobiler, you will find articles in this edition on winter tires, traffic control devices, speeding, courtesy, preventing theft, and a very "trendy" subject, ecoresponsibility. Who knows? The soaring price of gasoline and the need to review our driving habits could help reduce speeding on Québec roads, as well as greenhouse gas emissions. Stay tuned ...

This winter, give safety on the road the right of way!

Paul Thibaudeau, Publisher

CONTENTS

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|--|
| 5 | SIGNALS AHEAD!
KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED! | 15 | PEDESTRIANS AND MOTORISTS,
PUT SAFETY FIRST! |
| 7 | DON'T TEMPT THIEVES –
OUTSMART THEM! | 16 | GET WITH THE TREND!
BE ECORESPONSIBLE! |
| 9 | DRINKING OR DRIVING:
ONLY ONE CHOICE | 18 | SURVEILLANCE
OF SNOWMOBILE TRAILS:
A PRIORITY |
| 11 | THIS WINTER, BITE INTO THE SNOW! | 21 | BE COURTEOUS – WHAT GOES
AROUND COMES AROUND! |
| 12 | IT'S TIME...
TO INPECT, TO CHECK,
TO STOCK UP ON THE ESSENTIALS | 22 | ESSENTIAL
PHONE NUMBERS
Tolérance Zéro and
Opération Nez rouge |
| 14 | THINK OF OTHER PEOPLE...
SLOW DOWN! | | |



Publisher Paul Thibaudeau

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Circulate before recycling!



FOLLOW THE SIGNS TO BETTER DRIVING

**For your own safety and that of others,
pay attention to the road signs.**

Road signs are part of the landscape. They not only tell you what road to take but warn you of the potential dangers ahead. Good drivers know how to read the road. Be a better driver by adapting to the various situations around you.

SIGNALS AHEAD! KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED!

In winter, freezing rain, snow and wind sometimes reduce visibility for motorists and pedestrians. Fortunately, there are traffic signals.



It's yellow... prepare to stop!

Have you noticed the alternately flashing yellow lights on the top front and rear of school buses? This is an advance warning signal of a compulsory stop. Since April 29, 2005, school bus drivers must activate the advance warning system to:

- warn following or approaching motorists that the bus is going to stop;
- slow down traffic behind and ahead of the bus;
- and thus avoid sudden braking or acceleration.

Then, as usual, the bus stops, and all at once the red lights flash and the stop sign opens up, and you stop your vehicle. Only then, according to the safety rules, can schoolchildren get on or off the bus or pass in front of it.

It's red: stop or turn right?

For the past two years, motorists are allowed to turn right on a red light, except on the Island of Montréal and at intersections where the signs prohibit it.

This is a delicate manoeuvre that requires us to be vigilant and courteous. This is especially true in winter, because snow and ice create more hazards for pedestrians and obstruct our field of vision. Keep one word in mind: **caution**.

1... 2... 3... stop, look, decide: three simple steps before turning.

Don't forget: turning right on red is an option, not an obligation.

PEDESTRIANS, ON YOUR MARKS ...

Have you looked left, then right, then left again? Have you looked over your left shoulder to make sure that no vehicle is preparing to enter the intersection?

Go ahead! Cross!

Watch out! It only
takes seconds!



Don't let your car and its contents vanish—lock up!

For more information,
contact one of our Insurance
Information agents at:
Montreal area: (514) 288-6015
Elsewhere in Quebec: 1-800-361-5131

Visit our website at
www.insurancekit.ca
for a host of ideas
on how to prevent theft.



Representing the companies that insure your home, automobile and business

DON'T TEMPT THIEVES - OUTSMART THEM!

By JACK CHADIRDJIAN
Director Public Affairs
and Government Relations
Insurance Bureau of Canada
Groupeement des assureurs
automobiles



Every year in Québec, more than 39,000 vehicles are stolen, one theft every 13 minutes. That's not all: there are more than 43,000 thefts of property left in cars. You can avoid both situations by following these simple recommendations.

Multiple precautions are better than one

- Install an antitheft device approved by the Insurance Bureau of Canada's Vehicle Information Centre. With this system, your vehicle can be started only with the original key.
- Have the major components of your automobile engraved.
- Never leave your vehicle running unattended.
- Lock the doors and close the windows of your vehicle.
- Block the wheels by turning them to the side and put on the parking brake: you will make towing more difficult.
- Choose a safe and well-lit parking spot.
- Give only the vehicle key to the parking lot attendant. Keep your key ring with you.
- Park in your garage, if you have one.

Outsmart the thieves

- Thieves steal objects that are in plain sight and easy to resell: purses, wallets, cameras, computers and clothing. Outsmart the thieves – hide your goods!
- Don't transport valuables. If you have no other choice, hide them before leaving and not when you get out of your vehicle. Thieves could be watching you from a distance and then break into your car.

Too often, theft is the result of simple negligence. Unfortunately, everyone who buys insurance ends up paying the bill. Last year, insurers paid out \$243 million in claims.

Be vigilant – all a thief needs is a few seconds ...

To find out more about car insurance and preventing theft, or **to order your free information kit** *Be Sure About Your Insurance*, call the Insurance Information Centre at 514 288-6015 (Montréal region), or 1 800 361-5131 (rest of Québec) or visit

www.trousseassurance.ca.

THINK AHEAD

If you drink, you can't drive.

BEFORE YOU DRINK,

THINK AHEAD!

- Designate a driver who will stay sober to take you home;

- if you're at a friend's, ask to stay over;

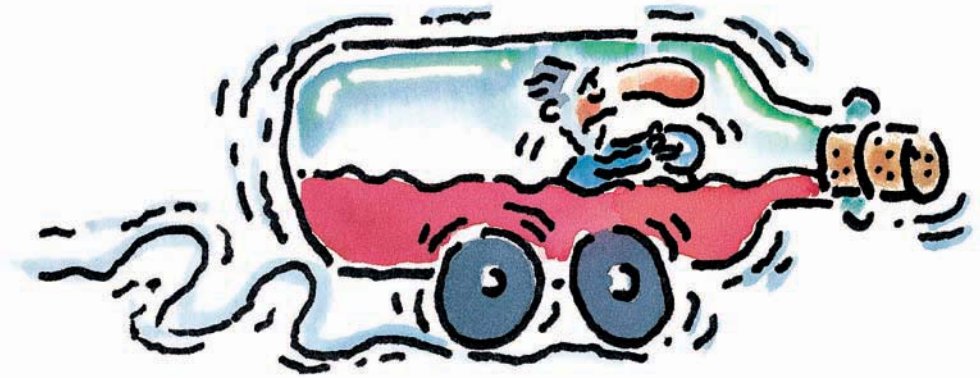
- plan on taking a taxi or public transit;

- call on the services of an impaired driver escort such as Opération Nez rouge or Tolérance Zéro.

Société de l'assurance
automobile

Québec 

DRINKING OR DRIVING: ONLY ONE CHOICE



When you drink, your ability to judge distances, peripheral vision and sensory and auditory perception are reduced. Your judgment is not as sharp and your reflexes are slower.

Time is the only effective way to eliminate alcohol

It is untrue that:

- drinking coffee;
- taking a shower, even a cold one;
- walking;
- dancing or;
- eating after drinking
...help reduce the level of alcohol in the blood.

Remember that the effect of alcohol is exacerbated if you:

- drink quickly;
- drink on an empty stomach;
- are tired, physically unfit or stressed, and;
- take certain types of drugs such as tranquilizers or antihistamines.

Some simple tips

If you are celebrating:

- give your keys to a friend for safekeeping;
- pick a designated driver in your group, i.e. someone who will not drink and who will drive the others home;
- use a taxi;
- use mass transit;
- sleep at your friends' house.

Call drive-home services like **Tolérance Zéro** all year round, or **Opération Nez rouge** during the holiday period.





All set for winter?

You know that winter tires offer big benefits over all-season tires! With winter tires, braking distance is 25% shorter and you have less chance of winding up in the ditch. But watch out! Your winter tires must be in good condition. For example, if the tread grooves are less than 4.8 mm deep, you should change your tires.



WINTER DRIVING

Remember—even with good tires, you have to adjust your driving to weather and road conditions. Slow down and maintain a greater distance between you and the vehicle ahead.



THIS WINTER, BITE INTO THE SNOW!

Are you convinced that winter tires are better than all-season tires? You're right! But they have to be of good quality and in good condition. How can they bite into the snow if they've lost their teeth?

A tire's teeth are the grooves in its tread. The deeper they are, the better the traction will be. In fact, winter tires are specially sculpted to prevent snow from accumulating in the grooves. They should be at least 4.8 mm deep, allowing them to:

- “grip” the snow;
- discharge snow and slush quickly;
- reduce braking distances;
- accelerate safely.

By “biting” into the snow, your tires keep you on the road. On icy surfaces, the softer rubber of winter tires will stop you from skidding.

A matter of pressure

Tire pressure varies by about 1 pound/in² when the outdoor temperature rises or falls by 6°C. The colder it is, the more it drops. Once a month, check

or have someone cold-check the pressure of all four tires. A pressure drop of as little as 10% can make driving more hazardous.

Tires inflated to the right pressure:

- reduce fuel consumption;
- hold the road better (handling, grip);
- don't wear as quickly.

What is the right pressure? The one recommended by the vehicle's manufacturer!

Don't be overconfident

Quality winter tires in good condition are no guarantee against accidents. Adapt your driving to weather and road conditions:

- slow down
- maintain more distance from other vehicles.



Did you know that...

- Winter tires in good condition let you reduce braking distance by up to 25%.
- Winter tires maintain their elasticity to as low as - 40°C.
- Studded tires are permitted from October 15 to May 1 on vehicles of less than 3000 kg.
- ONLY ONE tire underinflated by 6 pounds/in² can increase fuel consumption by 3%.

IT'S TIME



To inspect:

- winter tires, including the spare tire;
- the electrical, ignition and exhaust systems;
- the motor oil, antifreeze and transmission, power steering and brake fluid levels;
- the suspension;
- the fan and alternator belts;
- the alternator;
- the brakes;
- the battery.

To check:

- the lights, flashers, distress lights and windshield wipers;
- the windshield washer fluid level;
- the heating and defrosting system.

To stock up on the essentials:

- shovel, brush, scraper and booster cables;
- wire traction mats;
- fuel line antifreeze;
- windshield washer fluid designed for winter;
- bag of sand or salt;
- flashlight and spare batteries;
- blanket and warm clothing;
- distress flags, flares and other luminous devices (reflector, electric lamp);
- first aid kit;
- carbon monoxide detector.

Face the winter

Before each departure, clear the snow **completely** from your car: windows, roof, hood and headlights.

ME...



THE HIGHWAY SAFETY CODE REQUIRES:

FINE

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The windshield and the other windows of a motor vehicle must conform to the standards established by regulation to ensure good visibility for the driver. (<i>Section 265</i>) | from \$90 to \$175
+ \$10 costs |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No person may dispose of, deposit or throw snow, ice or any other substance upon a public highway or allow any other person to do so or, when driving a vehicle, allow snow, ice or any other substance to fall from the vehicle onto a public highway. (<i>Section 498</i>) | \$60
+ \$10 costs |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The driver of a road vehicle must reduce the speed of his vehicle when visibility conditions become inadequate because of darkness, fog, rain or other precipitation or when the roadway is slippery or not completely cleared. (<i>Section 330</i>) | \$60
+ \$10 costs |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every road vehicle must be fitted with tires that conform to the standards prescribed by regulation. (<i>Section 270</i>) | from \$90 to \$200
+ \$10 costs |

THINK OF OTHER PEOPLE... SLOW DOWN!

Every year, speeding causes an average of 150 deaths and over 7,000 injuries on Québec roads.

In addition, because of the force of the impact, accidents related to speeding (loss of control, dangerous passing) cause more serious injuries than those suffered in accidents where the driver observes the speed limit.

A complex road environment

Advertising is full of “imaginary” road environments. Skillfully driven by professional drivers, the cars sail along at full speed, on closed courses, with the road all to themselves.

Reality is totally different! The road is a complex environment where thousand of “ordinary drivers”, pedestrians and cyclists cross paths every day. Because they account for this environment, the speed limits indicate the maximum safe speed at which the driver should circulate. The risks are real on the road and the consequences of speeding can be devastating.



Remember that:

- Rain, fog and snow reduce visibility and increase the risks of an accident. S-L-O-W D-O-W-N.
- Speed increases the violence of the impact. Nobody can escape this law of physics, even a good driver at the wheel of an excellent car.

What must you do when you see this sign?



Answer: You *must* yield the right of way to vehicles driving in a priority lane by **reducing your speed**.

Speeding can slow you down for good.

Société de l'assurance automobile
Québec



PEDESTRIANS AND MOTORISTS, PUT SAFETY FIRST!

Pedestrians are the most vulnerable road users because they have no protection. To share the road safely, pedestrians and motorists must be vigilant and observe certain rules.

Pedestrians

- Use the sidewalk. If there isn't one, walk on the edge of the road, facing traffic.
- Cross only at intersections or crosswalks, where you have priority. What if there aren't any? Then, let the cyclists and motorists pass before crossing.
- At traffic lights, cross only when the white silhouette appears.
- If there are no pedestrian traffic lights, cross on the green light, but first look left, then right and left again to make sure the road is clear.
- Avoid crossing between two parked vehicles.
- In gloomy weather and at nightfall, wear highly visible clothing.

In 2004:

- 84 pedestrians died;
- 509 were seriously injured;
- 3,127 were slightly injured.

Motorists

- Yield the right of way to pedestrians – they have priority.
- Obey the speed limits and account for road and weather conditions.
- At compulsory stop signs, yield the right of way to pedestrians.
- At intersections, obey the stop line.
- Stop your vehicle when a pedestrian enters a crosswalk.
- When turning right on a red light: Stop! Look! Decide!
- The alternately flashing yellow lights on a school bus tell you that it will stop soon: be prepared! Stop five metres from a school bus when the red lights are flashing.
- Obey the school crossing guard's signal to stop.

Safety on the roads is everyone's responsibility!



Did you know that...

Most accidents involving pedestrians occur between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. at places where the speed limit is 50 km/h or less.



GET WITH THE TREND! BE

Transportation in Québec accounts for nearly 40% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Is using an automobile, one of the main causes of these harmful emissions, always a necessity? Of course not!

Being ecoresponsible means adopting less polluting ways to commute. And with the unpredictable fluctuations in gasoline prices, these alternatives are even more tempting!

First of all, there's public transit

Of all the means of transportation that can replace the car, public transit is generally the most accessible. Indeed, no less than 73% of Québec's population has access to public transit services. Taking the bus, the commuter train or the Métro contributes to:

- reducing GHG emissions;

- improving the quality of life by reducing road congestion and noise;
- reducing accident risks.

Think about it: because one bus replaces more than 40 cars, it prevents the discharge of 168 tonnes of pollutants into the atmosphere every year.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. One litre of gasoline produces:

- A) 1.8 kg of CO₂
- B) 2,4 kg of CO₂
- C) 3,5 kg of CO₂

2. A light vehicle emits an annual average of:

- A) 8,3 tonnes of GHG
- B) 2,7 tonnes of GHG
- C) 4,5 tonnes of GHG

3. During its useful life, an automobile remains stationary an average of:

- A) 92% of the time
- B) 45% of the time
- C) 70% of the time

4. An air conditioner can increase fuel consumption:

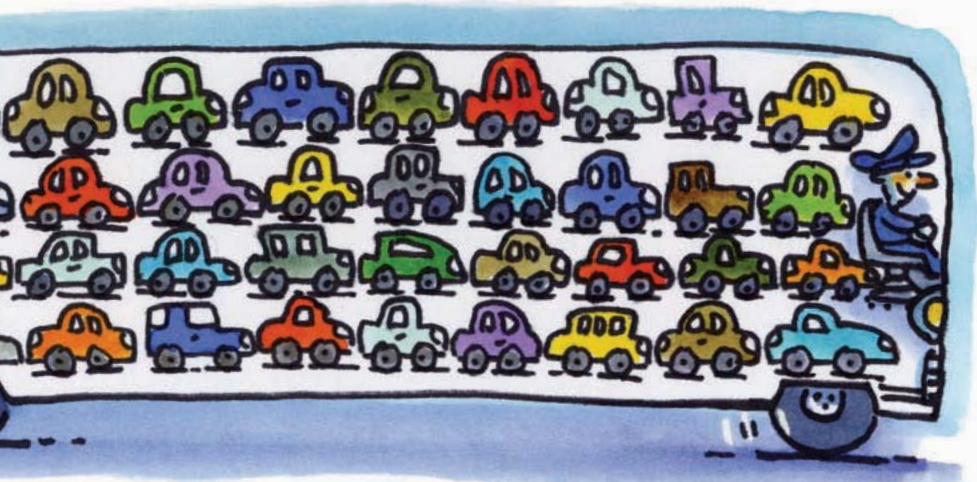
- A) more than 20%
- B) 10%
- C) 15%

5. An engine reaches its full efficiency after travelling:

- A) 2 km
- B) 3 km
- C) 5 km

Answers
1. B; 2. C; 3. A; 4. A; 5. C

ECORESPONSIBLE!



Next there's car pooling

This is an efficient way to commute eco-responsibly. In addition to helping reduce congestion and GHG emissions, car pooling makes commuting more enjoyable and less costly. It can also make the trip faster when car poolers can use reserved bus lanes.

To help match drivers and passengers, the ministère des Transports makes a **car pool database available on its Web site www.mtq.gouv.qc.ca, for every region of Québec.**

Bicycling and walking

Bicycling in winter? Yes indeed! In major urban centres, when conditions permit, well-muffled cyclists make noticeable appearances. You find this too big a step? Then opt for... walking. It's free, and good for your health.

Did you know that...

- Poor maintenance of a vehicle can result in overconsumption of 0.5 to 1 litre of fuel per 100 kilometres.
- Switching from aggressive driving to more flexible driving can easily save 1 to 2 litres of fuel per 100 kilometres.
- At 100 km/h, a vehicle consumes 10% more fuel than at 90 km/h, and 40% more at 120 km/h.
- When an engine idles for more than 10 seconds, it consumes more fuel than when the ignition is switched on again.



SURVEILLANCE OF SNOWMOBILE TRAILS: A PRIORITY

For the 2005-2006 season, the Fédération des clubs de motoneigistes du Québec, in conjunction with the ministère des Transports du Québec, intends to focus on surveillance of trails by trail security officers specially trained to enforce the rules and the *Act respecting off-highway vehicles*.

It is important to remember that, under the Act, trail security officers can complete a general offence report resulting in a ticket. They also work in cooperation with the police for joint surveillance operations, particularly for alcohol or speeding.

Main safety rules

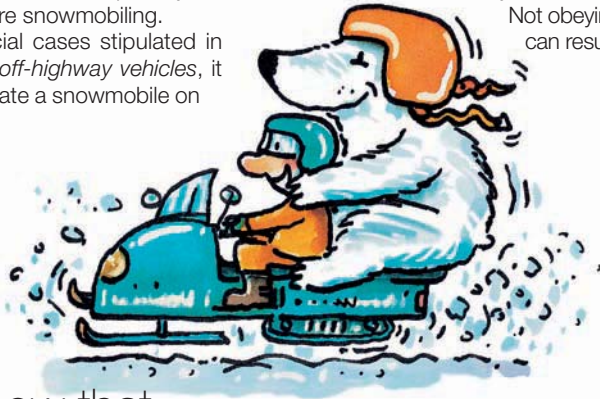
- The trails developed by clubs are the safest places to snowmobile. Remember that one third of fatal accidents occur on public roads and another third on water bodies.
- Speeding, alcohol abuse and carelessness are the main causes of fatal snowmobile accidents.
- Wearing a safety helmet is compulsory, no matter where you are snowmobiling.
- Except in the special cases stipulated in the *Act respecting off-highway vehicles*, it is forbidden to operate a snowmobile on public roads.

- You may cross or drive on public roads only at authorized locations indicated by traffic signs.
- Obey the 70 km/h speed limit or the one indicated on the traffic signs.
- Before driving on a body of water, make sure that the ice cover has frozen enough.

Remember

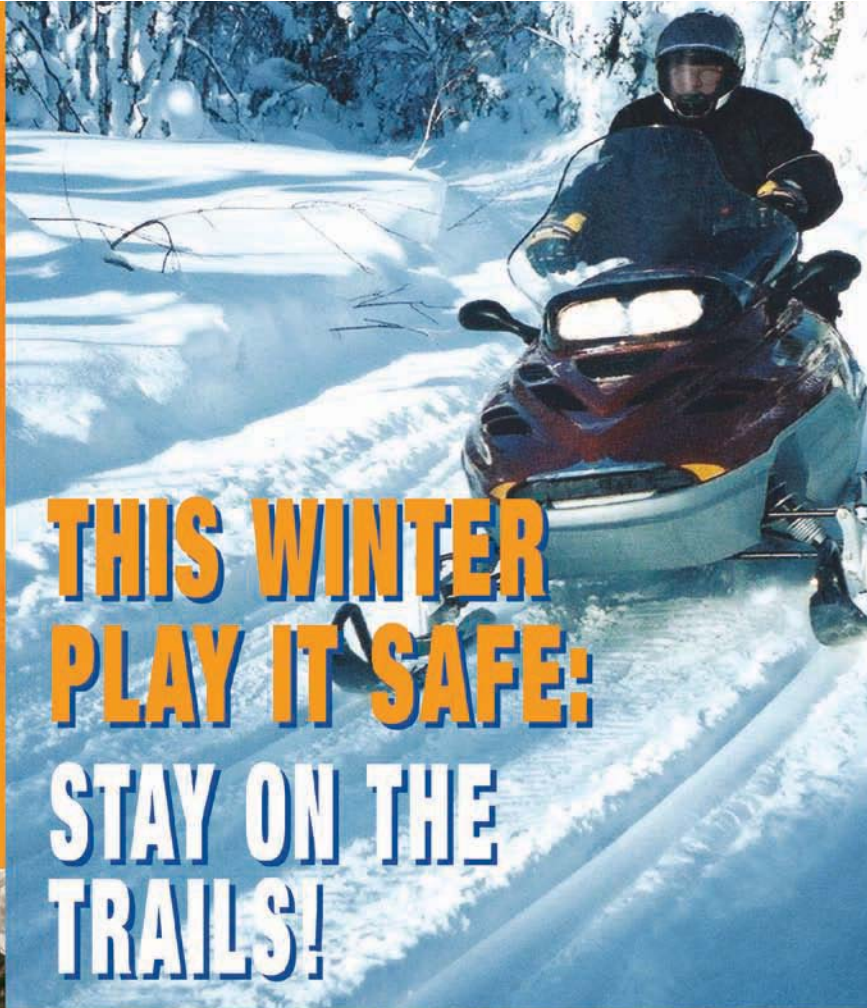
- You must obtain the owner's authorization to snowmobile on private land.
- It is forbidden to modify your snowmobile, particularly the muffler, or other components.
- As you approach an inhabited area, slow down. Be careful not to make noise, especially at night!
- There is no drive-home service on snowmobile trails. But drinking and driving is a criminal offence, just as it is on the road! If you drink, don't drive.
- To operate a vehicle on a trail developed by the Federation, the Act requires you to hold a right of access issued by a snowmobile club.

Not obeying this rule can result in a fine.



Did you know that...

30 metres or less from a residence, the maximum speed limit is 30 km/h.



**THIS WINTER
PLAY IT SAFE:
STAY ON THE
TRAILS!**



Have fun on the run.



But don't drink 'til you're done.



BE COURTEOUS – WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND!

Curiously, even though cars are more and more comfortable, people are increasingly impatient to reach their destination so they can get out of them. This impatience often results in discourteous and dangerous behaviour.



Keep your distance

Keep a safe distance so you can react in time: allow at least two seconds between your vehicle and the one you are following.

- Choose a reference point (lamppost, traffic sign, etc.).
- When the vehicle you are following passes the reference point, start counting “a thousand and one, a thousand and two”.
- If you reach the reference point before the end of this formula, you’re following too closely. Slow down and keep your distance.

Don’t cut in

When you have to pass a vehicle:

- obey the broken lines on the roadway;
- watch whether the vehicle behind you is entering the left lane;

- make sure that the passing lane is free for a safe distance;
- maintain a safe distance before returning to the right lane;
- signal before turning or changing lanes;
- and, above all, don’t keep on passing in a zigzag pattern.

Are you being followed too closely?

1. Stay calm.
2. Be ready to react if the driver who is tailgating passes you in an inappropriate zone.
3. As soon as circumstances allow, let the driver pass you, slow down and yield the right of way.

Courtesy is a lot of little gestures that make trips safer and less stressful.



ESSENTIAL PHONE NUMBERS

➤ **Ministère des Transports du Québec**

Toll free: **1 888 355-0511**
 Cellular phone subscribers: **#0511**
 Web site: **www.inforoutiere.qc.ca**

➤ **RDPRM**

Before you buy or lease a vehicle
(fees are applicable for this service)
 Montréal: **514 864-4949**
 Québec City: **418 646-4949**
 Toll free: **1 800 465-4949**
 Web site: **www.rdprm.gouv.qc.ca**

➤ **Sûreté du Québec Urgence-dépannage**

All regions: **310-4141**
 Cellular phone subscribers: ***4141** (toll free)
 * Same numbers for exclusive towing in certain areas in Québec.

➤ **Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec**

Québec City: **418 643-7620**
 Montréal: **514 873-7620**
 Elsewhere in Québec, Canada and
 the United States: **1 800 361-7620**
 Web site: **www.saaq.gouv.qc.ca**

ATS/ATME (for the hearing impaired)
 Montréal: **514 954-7763**
 Elsewhere in Québec: **1 800 565-7763**

Before lending or renting your vehicle, check the
 validity of the driver's licence by calling
1 900 565-1212

(a \$1.50 fee applies to each call)

This service is available at all times.



All year round, Tolérance Zéro offers a drive-home service.

All regions	418 389-4611
Bell Mobility subscribers: #1011	450 779-8811
Victoriaville 819 352-9011	418 953-4711
Drummondville 819 473-1011	1 866 288-1011
Acton Vale 1 877 473-1011	418 297-4811
Sherbrooke 819 578-6333	Charlesbourg-
Thetford Mines 418 332-9411	Beauport-Québec City 418 951-4242
Lac-Mégantic 819 582-9211	Sainte-Foy-Sillery-
from Thursday to Saturday	Cap-Rouge 418 951-2911
Granby 4 50 522-2011	Montmagny 418 234-3611
Trois-Rivières 819 609-7011	Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 514 213-1501
Shawinigan 819 692-6911	Longueuil 514 755-1011
Saint-Georges 418 222-7711	Belœil 514 206-7112
Toll free: 1 888 822-7711	Châteauguay 514 715-7611
Lac-Etchemin 1 888 822-7711	Valleyfield 450 567-4811



During the Holiday period, call Opération Nez rouge!

Québec City: 418 688-8080
 Montréal: 514 256-2510

Rest of Québec: you will find the phone numbers at
www.operationnezrouge.com along with the forms to register
 as a volunteer.

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 Online Services

Take advantage of our online services at:

www.saaq.gouv.qc.ca

Want to put your vehicle in storage
 over the winter?

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WOULD YOU BUY THIS VEHICLE WITHOUT SEEING IT?



Obviously not! But even a shiny body and a revved-up engine can hide unpleasant surprises...

If you buy a vehicle without consulting* the Register of personal and movable real rights (RDPRM), it could be seized if the former owner hasn't paid for it in full. Consult the RDPRM: it's a simple step that will save you a lot of problems.

Before buying a vehicle or leasing it long term, ALWAYS consult the RDPRM ... so that you don't buy other people's debts!

*There is a charge for this service.

www.rdprm.gouv.qc.ca

Montréal: 514 864-4949
Québec: 418 646-4949
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