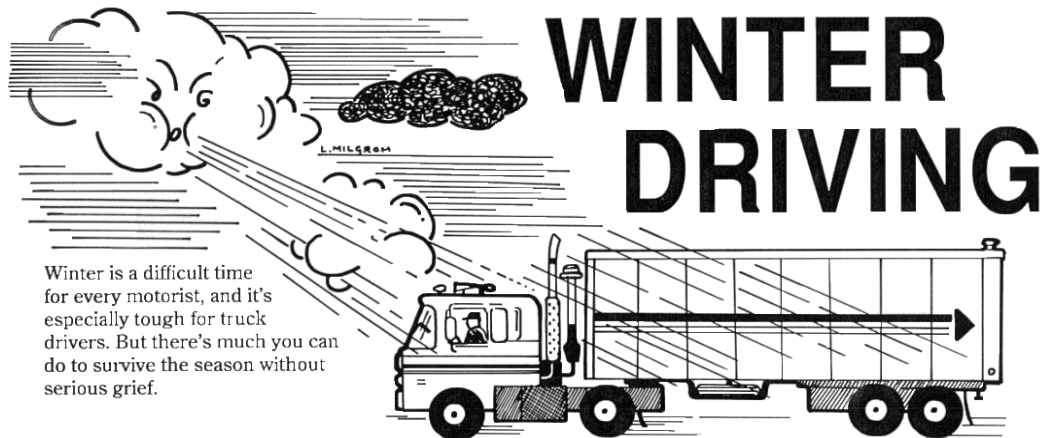


When the Going Gets Rough



Winter is a difficult time for every motorist, and it's especially tough for truck drivers. But there's much you can do to survive the season without serious grief.

Winterize Your Rig

Be thinking about winter long before the first snow hits. Be sure your truck is winterized, and so are you, by the time you make your first cold weather run.

Put on new tires if treads aren't deep enough to give you the traction you need on snow and ice. Start carrying tire chains. Change our oil to 15W-40, if you're not using it all year round.

Replace wiper blades and be sure your cab heater and defroster are in good working order.

Clean battery connections and starter cables. Install heating devices for the batteries, fuel tanks, cooling system, and oil. Chances are the same heater will do double duty for oil and coolant.

Cold Starting

When cold nights come, start parking your truck on the south side of buildings, to block the north wind. Zip up the winter front to keep the heat inside. Check your engine heater the first time you use it to make sure it's working.

Leave the glow plug on longer as the temperature drops. You only

need to operate it for a minute at 40 degrees Fahrenheit (4 degrees Celsius), but it needs to be on for three minutes at 10 below.

You may want to carry a spay can of ether to assist in starting. But go easy. Too much ether and you'll race the engine and have flames shooting out your stacks. Don't use it at all if you have the glow plug or manifold heater going. The ether could catch fire or explode.

It's safer to install an automatic starting fluid assembly. This is a small device which injects a measured dose of ether each time you start the engine.

Easy Does It

Go easy on snow and ice. Too much power to the drive wheels can cause you to lose traction and go into a side skid. On glare ice, it doesn't take much to spin your wheels. Test carefully to see how much throttle will gain you some traction without spinning your wheels.

Separate your tractor and trailer often in winter and apply light-weight chassis lube to the fifth wheel. If it gets stiff, turning is difficult and you're likely to lose control.

Winterize Yourself

Carry survival supplies in case you're stranded in a blizzard. Carry a set of heavy protective clothing as well as a shovel, an extra blanket, a supply of water, some emergency rations, and a first-aid kit.

If you're properly equipped, you may be able to leave a stranded truck and go for help. But if you have no clear idea of where you're going, you're better off staying put. Remain calm, stay dry, and keep warm. Conserve fuel by running the engine intermittently. Use your CB radio to stay in touch with the outside world.

Make Sure You Survive

Prepare yourself for winter when it's still warm. Master the techniques of proper winter driving and you'll make it through the harshest weather with your safety record still intact.