

# Safety Memo



February 4, 2014

## *Tire Chain Safety*

**Communication Expectation:** All First Line Supervisors requested review and reinforce information and expectations with their crews.

### **Using Chains on Tires**

Using chains on tires is necessary in some snowy and icy conditions. When the snow begins to fall, the challenge of driving on these roadways becomes even more difficult. If installed correctly, chains can be the answer.

### **When to Use Chains on Tires**

There are a variety of tire chains available that are able to fit nearly every passenger car, truck, SUV, and big rig that might be forced to drive through heavy snow or ice. If you have never used chains on tires, the process is quite simple. You shouldn't put chains on your tires until you're driving on roadways that are completely covered by snow / ice.

### **How to Safely Use Chains on Tires**

One common misconception with drivers who are new to driving with chains on their tires is the belief that chains will automatically result in expert performance and traction no matter how bad the roads are. Chains will help provide added traction on snow and ice, but they won't instantly provide the traction and handling that you might have under ideal conditions. Simply put, you might still experience the slipping and sliding that's common on wintertime roads if you don't drive with caution.

Getting added safety from chains on tires requires an understanding of your environment and a respect for Mother Nature. With chains, it's very important to drive slowly, maneuver carefully, and allow extra distance when following other cars. Driving with tire chains also means an adherence to the recommended travel speeds for a specific set of chains, even if driving in wide open space. Most recommend that you do not exceed speeds of 20-30 miles per hour. Carefully follow the guidelines provided with your chains to ensure your safety.

Installing tire chains is a relatively simple task. Most sets come complete with instructions. First, it's important to use the correct chains for your tire size. You can find this information on the side of your tire. If you have any questions as to which chains you should use, consult Transportation Department.

Nearly every kind of chain is installed by laying down the chains flat in front of or behind the tires, driving onto the set of chains and then attaching them around each tire. When properly installed, they will fit tightly on the tires, leaving very little slack. Once you have driven on the chains for a short distance, it's recommended that you check how the chains are fitting on your tires. After they've been rolled over a few times, they may have settled and become too loose or too tight.

**It is important that you inspect the chains for wear before and after every use.**

**Questions or concerns:** Please contact your local safety professional or a member of the Electric Utilities Tool and Equipment Committee.