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SAFETY NEWSLETTER

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Mr. Humberto "Bert" Garrido Becomes Chief, Systems Safety, Quality and Reliability Division

Mr. Bert Garrido will enter on duty as Chief, Systems Safety, Quality and Reliability Division on January 24, 1994. Mr. Garrido comes to LaRC from the State of Florida, Department of Labor and Employment Security, where he was Director of Safety. We welcome Bert to LaRC and look forward to supporting him in the future.

SAFE WINTER DRIVING

Whether you drive for a living or just to work, winter weather conditions provide a challenge to even the most seasoned driver. That's why it's important to prepare ahead for icy or snowy weather. .

Before you start

Make sure to have an overall tuneup. Check your battery clamps for corrosion since this is a frequent cause of cold weather non-starts. Brakes should be checked and repaired if necessary. Wipers should be in good working order. Be sure you have plenty of wiper fluid as well. Check to see that your heater, defroster and rear window defogger are working properly. Add winter-weight motor oil, if you're not already using all-season oil. Keep your gas tank half full for unexpected emergencies. This will also prevent your gas lines from freezing.

Tires are of particular concern in snow or ice. All season tires perform well under most weather conditions (even rain), but consider snow tires if you will be driving in deep snow. Check the air pressure often, cold weather can cause it to drop one pound per square inch for each ten-degree drop in temperature.

Emergency Supplies

To be fully prepared for emergencies, a winter driving kit should include the following:

- ice-scraper, snow brush and snow shovel
- booster cables, flashlight and extra batteries
- warning devices such as flares or triangles
- first aid kit
- extra warm clothing and blankets
- bag of abrasive material such as sand, salt or kitty liter
- traction mats
- high energy, non-spoilable food such as granola bars, nuts, raisins and water
- good sunglasses to avoid the glare of snow and sunshine

Braking and Skidding

To brake safely on wet or icy pavement, squeeze the brake pedal down until the brakes are about to lock. Then let up and squeeze again. If you start to skid, grip the steering wheel firmly but avoid large turns. Steer in the direction of the skid. A few light turns are usually enough to get you out of the swerve. Follow the "off-off" principle: keep your foot off the accelerator and off the brake. Even if you gain control after the initial skid, don't try to brake or accelerate too soon.

The ultimate nightmare - getting stuck

You're stuck in a snow drift - what do you do ? Don't just spin your wheels. Clear away as much snow as possible with your handy shovel. Then spread abrasive material, such as sand, on the slippery areas for better traction. If you're still partially stuck, turn the steering wheel from side to side to clear more snow. Now, accelerate slowly and rock the car forward and backward with the front wheels pointed straight ahead.

The beat advice on snowy days ? Stay home !