



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

# Office of the Sheriff

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ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO THE SHERIFF

## Weather Concerns and Safety / Wind – Rain – Water

A series of powerful winter storms are expected to bring significant precipitation to California through San Mateo County this week and the overall rainfall could be impressive. These adverse weather conditions shout **CAUTION!** – so, take some time to prepare for safe travel and be aware of unsafe conditions. For the next couple of days additional storms are forecast to arrive.

**WIND** - Be aware that with most high wind conditions also comes the potential for downed power lines. Consider **ALL** downed lines to be electrically charged and active until verified by an electric company representative **on the scene**. Consider all fences and metal objects in the area to be electrically charged if they come in contact with downed power lines. **You may not be aware the fence you are about to touch is charged from a downed power line 1000 feet away!**

While driving, consider that your visibility may become impaired with little notice by blowing debris, rain and snow. Always have a defensive awareness of the drivers around you. Be prepared and know how your vehicle reacts to such conditions so you don't over react. Watch your speed and **NEVER** drive at an unsafe speed for the present conditions. By this afternoon, you should know if your windshield wiper blades are in good working condition. **ALWAYS** drive with your headlights on during adverse weather conditions and make certain everyone has their seat belts on!

### RAIN

Some roadways have experienced trace amounts of rain in the past few weeks and some areas have not had rain yet this season. Oils and greases have been absorbed in the surface of roadways and are often released with the first round of rains. These oils and greases then float on the roadway surface causing a real potential for slippery conditions. What appears to be a normal wet surface can easily become a dangerous roadway where rolling friction can be lost causing a driver to lose control of their vehicle. Standing water on the roadway surface can be equally as dangerous. Vehicles can "float" on the water while moving, a condition known as hydroplaning. Heavy down pours can also cause visibility concerns. Again, maintaining a defensive awareness to changing conditions is a must.

### WATER

With heavy rains come the potential for water and debris flows. Streams, rivers, waterways and drainages can all be quickly inundated given the right conditions. Roadways and intersections are susceptible to flooding when drains and sewers are clogged by leaves and other debris. Do not attempt to cross flooded roads until you are absolutely certain it can be done safely. Remember as little as a few inches of water in your vehicles engine compartment can cause your engine to stall, leaving you stranded in a potentially swift rising water situation. Drive slowly and safely and plan on some additional time to get where you're going, in case there's an accident that ties up traffic for awhile. **BE SAFE!!!**