

***NEWS RELEASE from the Maine Department of Public Safety
from Spokesman Steve McCausland - 626-3811***

The chief of the Maine State Police has two words for drivers during inclement winter weather - "slow down". Colonel Robert Williams said a rash of slide off crashes on the Maine Turnpike Friday morning during a dusting of snow illustrates that many Maine drivers have not yet adapted to winter driving conditions.

Williams said winter driving conditions in Maine can change rapidly by slick roads caused by snow, freezing rain and black ice conditions, and motorists need to adjust their speeds accordingly. The chief said there have been thirteen highway deaths since Christmas and eleven of those deaths were caused by drivers operating too fast for conditions.

Williams said, "Maine winter weather can change roads conditions in seconds and motorists need to be prepared to slow down to confront those driving challenges. Taking your foot off the accelerator may be safest way for drivers to get to their destinations without getting into trouble"

The chief said motorists should have their vehicle equipped with proper tires, windshield wipers, a shovel, a scraper, sand, extra clothing and a flashlight to counter any winter driving situation.