

Troopers warn 'spring ahead' doesn't mean icy road conditions are gone

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Several recent crashes in the Santiam Pass area attributed to unsafe speeds for the conditions should serve as reminders that potential icy conditions still exist even though we are seeing clear skies and what looks like dry roads, Oregon State Police reminds drivers. Spring-like weather doesn't mean hazardous icy road conditions are gone, especially in mountain passes such as Santiam Pass (OSP photo - 3/5/08) "Motorists navigating the mountain passes are seeing clear skies and dry roads but are forgetting that any one of the numerous curves that are shaded may be covered with ice," said OSP Sergeant Eric Brown of the Bend Area Command Office. "Common at this time of year is for the packed snow along the roadway shoulder to melt during the day and result in water run off onto the highway. That water will freeze overnight and the melt will be delayed in the shaded areas, or the highway will just stay ice covered due to no direct sun light." One example occurred Wednesday, March 5th, that nearly resulted in tragedy. OSP Senior Trooper Mike Brady was assisting Davis Towing near Lost Lake on the Santiam Pass. A motorist entered a shaded area and lost control on the ice, narrowly missing an oncoming car. While the tow company, ODOT and Senior Trooper Brady were clearing up the scene, another motorist driving too fast came upon the scene and lost control. The tow driver, ODOT employee and OSP trooper all believed they were in danger as the vehicle was sliding towards them. All three ran away from the sliding vehicle which slammed into the front of the tow truck. There were no injuries and both vehicles were able to be driven away. "The emphasis is to use caution and expect slippery conditions in the shaded areas of the mountain pass. Road conditions can change suddenly and drivers need to be anticipating the need to slow down prior to entering these areas. Any quick application of the brakes or accelerator can easily cause you to lose control," said Sergeant Brown. Yesterday's incident is also a reminder that drivers need to move over or slow down for stopped emergency vehicles. The "Move Over Law" states that if you are driving up behind any type of police car or emergency vehicle pulled over on the roadside with emergency lights flashing, you must:

MOVE OVER into another lane

If you can't safely change lanes, **SLOW DOWN**

In all cases, the driver must try to provide as much room as possible for the emergency vehicle.

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