

SAFETY ALERT

Driving for Work RTA in a Hailstorm

Document No: IW-HSQE-SA-18

Revision: 1.00

Approved By: Neil Lenehan

Effective Date: 12/06/2018

1. What Happened?

An Irish Water employee was involved in a serious road traffic incident whilst travelling for work on the M7 and M8 motorways. The employee was travelling in the middle of approximately ten vehicles when a severe hail storm occurred. A layer of hail built up very quickly on the road surface and compacted into a layer of ice. The line of traffic began to decelerate rapidly in response to this and as the vehicles bunched up, the cars in front lost control. The Irish Water employee attempted to brake to avoid the rear of a car in front but due to road conditions this was not effective. In order to avoid a collision with the vehicle in front of him the employee directed his vehicle towards the concrete central median, striking it. The vehicle was deflected back into the carriageway and came to rest in the slow lane facing pointing the wrong way up the carriage way. The employee was not seriously injured and suffered minor soreness and stiffness to the neck and shoulders area. The employee's vehicle was not involved in a collision with any other vehicle.



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2. Immediate Actions

- As the car was still serviceable and all traffic around was stationary the employee moved the car off the slow lane carriageway into the hard shoulder.
- Checking for other road users and donning a hi-visibility vest the employee left the vehicle, climbed behind the protective barrier and called the emergency services.
- An emergency assistance company was contacted to remove the vehicle safely from the hard shoulder.

3. Further Actions

- Line managers – should ensure that all of their reports have read this safety alert and re-emphasise the importance of familiarising themselves with Irish Water Driving for Policy, Driving Handbook, Driving for Work Procedure and that all new hires have completed their online Driving for Work Survey on Irish Water Academy.
- Drivers should implement simple tips such as:
 - Completing journey planning, including checking weather conditions in advance. *Note: in this instance there were no weather warnings in place or bulletins to warn of extreme driving conditions until the incidents occurred. The journey undertaken was essential and planned for optimum travel times and durations.*
 - Have knowledge of what to do in the event of an emergency.
 - Carry basic emergency equipment for your vehicle – e.g. hi-visibility

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clothing, torch, water proof warm clothing.

- Be aware of the possibility of a sudden deterioration in road conditions due to sudden changes in weather such as was experienced in this instance (see further information on winter driving below).

4. Further Information

- For further information on this safety alert please contact hsqe@water.ie
- [IW Driving for Work Policy HSQE-POL-002](#),
- [IW Safe Driving Handbook IW-HSQE-GL-08](#)
- [IW Driving for Work Procedure IW-HSQE-SOP-015](#).



5. Distribution list

Internal		
Asset Operations <input type="checkbox"/>	Asset Delivery <input type="checkbox"/>	Asset Management <input type="checkbox"/>
All IW Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

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Other Please Specify _____

External		
Local Authority <input type="checkbox"/>	DBO <input type="checkbox"/>	Capital Contracts <input type="checkbox"/>
Relevant Framework Contractors Please Specify _____		
Other Please Specify _____		