

## **MAUNA KEA WINTER DRIVING RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. All facilities should have chains available for all mountain vehicles, and individual staff members should be trained to install them.
2. Telescope operators and other observatory staff should maintain a watch for slippery road conditions. Temperature and humidity values will provide useful input, but periodic inspection of the road may be necessary during questionable conditions. If ice is encountered, inform the other observatories at the first opportunity.
3. When icy roads are anticipated, don't hesitate to put chains on the vehicles, even if they have studded tires. Chains are not too difficult to install on a level, relatively clean surface. If you wait until problems are encountered, it is often impossible to put the chains on. Chains provide the best traction on ice as long as the wheels do not lock up.
4. If you do encounter snow or icy conditions, MKSS should be contacted. If it occurs during the day, the road crew can come up and remove snow from the road. If the facilities are evacuated during the evening because of road conditions, Ron Koehler should be contacted if the conditions warrant. If the problem occurs early in the evening, Ron should be called. If the problem occurs after 10 p.m., some discretion should be used. A routine, safe evacuation does not warrant a phone call, but an e-mail message would be very helpful. If there are any situations that require immediate response from MKSS, or conditions are unusually bad, a call should be made.

### **If MKSS issues an absolute evacuation or road-closed order, all facilities must comply.**

5. Make sure you communicate with the other observatories or your destination once you decide to evacuate. Try to provide a reasonable estimated arrival time, so that those waiting for you do not worry unnecessarily.
6. Each facility must have just one person in charge of making evacuation decisions. In the evening, the facility telescope operator must be given the authority to do this. If a decision is made to evacuate, the attached procedure is strongly recommended.
7. When driving downhill on ice, it is important to keep the wheels from locking up. Use the lowest possible four-wheel drive gear, and if the brakes are applied, do so lightly, and do not disengage the clutch while braking.
8. Visiting observers, unless very familiar with driving on steep inclines during winter conditions, should not be allowed to drive themselves when the roads are likely to have ice.

9. Some conditions might make staying in the facility overnight the safest alternative. However, it is very difficult to anticipate what weather conditions might be encountered. It is always possible that the road will not be cleared for over a week - which can be life threatening. Try to anticipate impending icy conditions and evacuate before it is too late.
10. Even with precautions, it is still possible to have a fairly large group of individuals stranded at a facility. It would be good to take an inventory of your emergency supply stocks.
11. Post the enclosed flyer at your facility, and make sure your visiting astronomers understand the hazards and rules.
12. In all cases, slow driving speeds greatly reduce the hazards associated with winter roads.

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