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## SAFER DRIVING DURING RAINY WEATHER VITAL TO ACCIDENTS

*05 March 2014:* With the onset of autumn in South Africa, the rainy season across many parts of the country presents a number of safety issues for motorists due to poor visibility of other vehicles, road signs and even the road itself.

This is according to Nazeer Hoosen, Executive Director: PPS Short-Term Insurance, who says it is important for consumers to ensure they practice safer driving behavior and be more vigilant in wet weather conditions.

Hoosen provides the below tips for motorists to keep in mind when driving in the rain in order to lessen their chances of being involved in an accident.

### **Drive slower and with more caution**

It is very important to drive at a slower and safer pace when driving in the rain, says Hoosen. "It takes longer to stop when the road is wet, so driving at an increased following distance will mitigate the chances of a collision. Take into account greater traveling time as it will take motorists longer to reach their destination."

He says drivers must also avoid hard or sudden braking, as this may cause the vehicle to slide across the road and cause an accident. "Rather start braking earlier, less forcefully and take your foot off the accelerator to slow down little by little. This will also signal to any drivers behind the vehicle that you are slowing down."

### **Turn on the headlights**

Hoosen says motorists should switch on headlights even in light rain, foggy or overcast conditions. "This will help the motorists to see and be seen by other drivers and improve overall safety for all motorists on the road."

### **Be sure to check tyre traction and wipers on a regular basis**

Tyres with a low or illegal tread significantly reduces the vehicle's traction on a wet road and offers very little resistance to hydroplaning, says Hoosen. "It is also important that tyres are properly inflated and that the pressure is checked at least once a month. The correct air pressure for tyres is specified by the vehicle manufacturer and can usually be found on the door edge of the vehicle or in the owner's manual."

Replace old or brittle wipers as defective wipers will hinder visibility as the wipers will not clear water from the windshield properly, advises Hoosen. "Keep a spare pair of wipers in your car to ensure that you can replace faulty wipers immediately."

**Do not use cruise control**

Cruise control might allow drivers to be less vigilant to take their foot off of the pedals, which is not a good idea when driving on a wet road, says Hoosen. "Driving on a wet road requires the full attention of the driver and cruise control will slow his or her reaction time to brake or accelerate."

"Driving in rainy weather conditions severely increase the chances of collisions. Therefore, it is imperative that motorists arm themselves with knowledge on how to ensure that they are being safe on the roads to avoid dangerous accidents from occurring," concludes Hoosen.