

**Brookfield Public Safety Advisory Committee**  
**January 2023 Safety Tips**

- If our experience so far in 2023 is a valid guide, we are about to enter what many Vermonters know as a prolonged mud season which becomes better or worse depending on temperatures, rain and snow fall. Roads freeze and thaw almost daily and then freeze up for a period and then thaw again and then snow to cover things up to make it harder to see the ruts.
- What does this mean for your driving habits? They should include driving much slower on unpaved roads. Start your trip sooner and drive slower. The problem is that as the roads thaw we create deep tire tracks as we drive over the road, the road gets slimy and we may have trouble getting through. Then they freeze. Those frozen ruts may have a coating of slippery mud and snow or be very firm and can throw your vehicle around without any warning as they catch one of your tires. If you are going slow enough, you will be able to recover and proceed. If you are trying to hurry, you may find yourself in a ditch, in front of oncoming traffic or worse.
- Please slow down on the unpaved roads of which we have a lot in Brookfield and save your vehicle and yourselves. A tip for the ruts: If your tire gets into a hard rut, don't turn your wheel sharply to get out of it. Slow down more and continue in the rut until it ends. If the rut will take you in a dangerous direction, stop and then turn the wheel to get out of it carefully. A soft and sloppy rut may require different tactics.
- The prolonged mud season will be over sometime in April and you can resume your other safe driving habits. If this sounds like common sense, it is! However I have seen a lot of Boosh marks along Stone Road lately on both sides of the road to indicate that a number of our drivers have received a sudden and possibly expensive lesson on Mud Season driving. Please slow down and arrive safely.
- If you are walking on rutted roads with or without your dog, please remain alert and avoid becoming part of an event/accident.

Brookfield Public Safety Advisory Committee: Dan Mason, Mike Stoddard, Stuart Edson, Michael Rutkovsky, and Lew Stowell.