

Police concerned about drivers who don't adjust to conditions

Irresponsible motorists who put everyone at risk by failing to adjust their driving behaviour to account for sudden extreme weather conditions were once again responsible for hundreds of crashes and many multi-vehicle collisions in the central and southwestern part of the province last week, according to OPP.

Police maintain the most basic preventative, common sense driving behaviours, which are the key to safe driving under these hazardous road conditions, were absent from most of last Thursday's collisions. This is according to the hundreds of officers who responded to the thousands of calls for service that were received by OPP call centres in Orillia and London.

The basic safe-driving tips continue to be slow down, don't pass and keep distance between vehicles. If you don't need to be on the road, don't travel. If you are on the road, make sure that your full lighting package is on. Your taillights are just as important to be seen by other drivers as your headlights in these kinds of conditions.

'Motorists who drive in these conditions with their 'it won't happen to me attitude' and who continue to drive with reckless disregard for the safety of the other motorists around them and for our officers who have to respond to these calls, fail to take the most basic steps towards prevention of these avoidable collisions,' OPP Deputy Commissioner Brad Blair, provincial commander of traffic safety and operational support said Friday. 'The result was evident in the road carnage that we witnessed yesterday.'

'The media do a fantastic job of partnering with the OPP to help us deliver the message during these storms,' Blair added. 'Thanks to their assistance, the public is kept up to date on the major developments and traffic interruptions that are ongoing throughout the day; but what the public doesn't know is the logistics and large number of front-line and support personnel that we need to be engaged and deployed to respond to these thousands of calls during these situations.'

OPP report that between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. last Thursday, the Provincial Communications Centres received more than 3,300 calls for service and approximately 646 motor vehicles collisions were reported. There were three fatalities.

Nine OPP vehicles were struck while out at the scene of these collisions. One unattended cruiser was demolished by a dump truck while the officer was out of the vehicle. One officer sustained serious injuries in Perth County when her cruiser was struck from behind while at the scene of a collision.

While police extended their appreciation to those drivers who adjust their driving to the conditions of the roads, they will continue to target those aggressive drivers who do not.