

One of the most [common causes of car accidents](#) is inclement weather. Rain, snow, ice, fog, and other weather conditions make for hazardous driving, limiting visibility and making it easy to lose control of the vehicle. If you have been injured in a weather-related car accident, you may be entitled to compensation. Even if you are not sure you have a claim, a North Carolina car accident lawyer can help you understand your options.

Weather Conditions That Lead to Car Accidents in North Carolina

Weather can affect a driver's ability to drive safely in more ways than people expect, which is why it can cause so many accidents.

Rain

Rain is probably the most common weather condition that leads to car accidents in North Carolina. Even a comparatively small amount of rain can unexpectedly make road surfaces slippery. Heavy rains can lead to pooling water that can cause hydroplaning, causing the driver to lose control of the vehicle because the tires lose contact with the road. Rain can also decrease visibility, making it difficult for drivers to see the road ahead and avoid potential hazards in time.

Snow

While snow in North Carolina may not be as common as in other states, we do get snow occasionally. Snow can make roads more slippery than many people expect, causing them to slide off the road or into other vehicles. Drivers need to reduce their speed, increase their stopping distance, and be careful not to follow other vehicles too closely. Falling snow can also limit a drivers' visibility, making it difficult to see what is on the road ahead.

Ice

Whether caused by freezing rain or snow, ice is one of the most dangerous road conditions drivers can face. Icy roads often lead to car accidents because drivers fail to drive according to the conditions.

Fog

Fog is another hazard that often results in car accidents. Heavy fog can severely limit visibility, making it difficult to see other vehicles and the road ahead. When driving in fog, drivers need to slow down or perhaps pull off the road if they are unable to see and drive safely.

Heavy Winds

Windy conditions may not be as common as other weather conditions, but they can be just as dangerous. Heavy winds can make it difficult for drivers to maintain control of their vehicles. Sudden gusts of wind can push cars into the adjacent lane or even off the road.

What Should You Do if You Are Injured in a Weather-Related Accident?

Of course, the first thing you should do is seek medical care and follow your doctor's prescribed treatment. If you have health insurance, the majority of your medical expenses should be covered. If the accident did not involve any other vehicles, your only recourse is to then pursue a claim through your insurance company for the damage to your vehicle.

If there was [another driver involved](#), be sure to get their name, contact information, and insurance information in case you need to pursue a claim. You should document as much information concerning the accident as possible. You should also contact the police while still at the scene. The police will prepare an accident report that may later prove to be helpful if you need to pursue a claim against the other driver.

Weather-Related Accidents Are Often the Result of Negligence

Many people think that accidents due to bad weather are no one's fault. If you were involved in a weather-related accident with another driver, there is a good chance that the other driver was negligent in some way. Drivers have an obligation to take reasonable care when driving in adverse weather conditions. This means that certain driving habits

may be considered negligent that would not be when the weather is clear. For example:

- Driving too fast for conditions even though the driver is not speeding
- Following other vehicles too closely
- Braking too hard
- Failing to turn on the vehicle's headlights during rain

In addition, negligent drivers tend to drive no differently during bad weather than in normal conditions. As a result, the following examples of negligent driving could also have contributed to your accident:

- Unsafe lane changes
- Speeding
- Distracted driving
- Failing to yield
- Tailgating

In addition, the other driver's negligent maintenance of their vehicle may also be to blame. Bald tires, broken tail lights, or burned-out headlights can all contribute to an accident during inclement weather.

If you have been injured in a weather-related accident, your ability to recover compensation will depend on a careful analysis of the facts surrounding your case. An experienced North Carolina car accident attorney will be able to review your case and determine whether you have a claim.

Other Sources of Potential Liability in Hazardous Weather Accidents

Of course, not all weather-related car accidents are the result of someone else's negligence. You may still be able to pursue a claim for compensation on some other basis. For example:

- You may have a [products liability](#) claim against your vehicle's manufacturer or a parts manufacturer if your accident was caused by a vehicle defect
- You may have a negligent repair claim against the mechanic or shop who last worked on your vehicle if your accident was caused by a mechanical failure
- You may have a claim due to issues with the road itself such as visual obstructions, potholes, or poor drainage

Contributory Negligence in Weather-Related Car Accidents

[North Carolina law](#) prohibits drivers whose own negligence contributed to the accident from recovering any compensation for their injuries. As a result, the insurance company may try to argue that your own negligence contributed to the accident in an attempt to deny your claim. While this rule often yields a harsh result, it is important to remember two things:

1. The other party or their insurance company must prove that you were negligent; and
2. That your negligence contributed to the accident.

The burden is on the other party to prove these two elements, but an experienced attorney can protect you against any such claims.

Martin & Jones – Attorneys for People Injured in Weather-Related Accidents

If you have been injured in a weather-related accident, don't assume that you have no chance at getting the compensation you deserve. With decades of experience, we know how to get results in tough cases. To schedule a free consultation, contact us today at 800-662-1234 to learn more about how we can help you.