



ODOT preparing early for winter weather; drivers reminded to plan ahead

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Getting a head start prior to any major threat of winter weather, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation is making early preparations at its maintenance facilities for winter storms. Responsible for nearly 30,000 lane miles of highways in the state, ODOT is making sure all of its 122 salt sheds are fully stocked, 550 trucks tuned up and more than 1,000 maintenance employees are ready statewide to tackle whatever form of winter weather hits the state in the upcoming months.

Because each winter storm is different and much of the winter weather in the state can quickly shift between ice, sleet or snow, ODOT monitors conditions closely to determine what the best plan of action is with each storm.

This year, ODOT is prepared with a stockpile of over 70,000 tons of salt and 110,000 tons of a sand/salt mix spread among its maintenance facilities statewide. The department also has an additional 43,000 tons of salt stored in reserve at the Port of Catoosa to replenish supplies statewide as they are used.

Typically, bridges and overpasses freeze first during winter storms. Low overnight temperatures cause refreezing of once previously cleared roads, so snow and ice clearing operations are usually around-the-clock operations and often continue days after the original weather event.

As ODOT is making preparations, drivers need to keep in mind they also play a vital role in staying safe during winter storms. It is important to check weather forecasts before traveling, avoid driving in slick and hazardous conditions and to allow extra time to get to their destination. They need to also be cautious inside workzones, as lanes may be narrowed and traffic shifted.

Drivers should also stay at least 200 ft. behind road clearing equipment and not attempt to pass them. Crews are often driving on untreated roadways, so the safest place for drivers is well behind them, on the fresh layer of salt and sand.

During winter storms, ODOT also works closely with local law enforcement to monitor road and traffic conditions. Information on highway clearance operations will be sent as conditions warrant through Twitter (@OKDOT) as well as through road conditions updates posted in the Traffic Advisories section of www.okladot.state.ok.us.

To check CURRENT ROAD CONDITIONS in Oklahoma, call the Department of Public Safety's ROAD CONDITIONS HOTLINE at 888-425-2385 or www.dps.state.ok.us

Out-of-State Road Conditions

Arkansas	800-245-1672; www.idrivearkansas.com
Colorado	303-639-1111; www.cotrip.org
Kansas	866-511-5368; 511.ksdot.org
Missouri	888-275-6636; www.modot.org
New Mexico	800-432-4269; www.nmroads.com
Texas	800-452-9292; www.drivetexas.org

- www.okladot.state.ok.us -

(Editors and News Directors: For media inquiries, contact the ODOT Media and Public Relations Division at 405-521-6000.)

INFORMATION RELEASE

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