

Winter driving reminders

(Lincoln, Neb.) — As the leaves fall and cold weather approaches, the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) is encouraging drivers to be prepared for winter driving conditions.

NDOT works closely with its partners at the Nebraska State Patrol, Nebraska Emergency Management Agency as well as the National Weather Service to proactively educate and inform the traveling public on

ways to safeguard themselves from winter weather hazards. While NDOT monitors weather conditions, some storms are so severe, preparation can't forestall hazardous conditions that come with extremely low temperatures, low visibility, heavy snowfall or dangerous ice.

When winter weather conditions are hazardous, NDOT may indicate that travel is not advised. Such alerts are not issued without considerable thought and weighing the effects of such advisories.

Ultimately, the reduction of travelers on the roadway during a winter event assists NDOT with timely snow and ice removal, while improving safety for all those who share the roadway.

As always, as winter storms approach, travelers are urged to be alert, be aware and check the most up-to-date travel conditions available through 511, Nebraska's Advanced Traveler Information System.

The system is available at all times via Nebraska 511's smartphone app, online at www.511.nebraska.gov or by dialing 511 on your mobile device within the state, or if dialing from a landline or outside Nebraska at 1-800-906-9069.

After assessing the conditions, should individuals determine travel is necessary, NDOT reminds motorists to be prepared with warm clothing, water and food. If traveling a significant distance, a winter

weather survival kit stocked with additional items is advised. Additionally, travelers are advised to not drive faster than conditions allow. Surfaces will be slick under the snow and visibility may be poor. Allow plenty of time to arrive at your destination.

With snowplows out on the roads, travelers also are urged to be cautious and courteous to those operating them, making sure to:

- **Slow down as you approach plows. They travel slowly, usually 25 to 30 mph or less.**
- **Stay well behind plows to give you and them plenty of room. When traveling outside of a business or residential district, it is unlawful to follow a highway maintenance vehicle (snowplow, truck or grader) more closely than 100 feet when it is plowing snow, spreading salt or sand, or displaying a flashing amber or blue light.**
- **Never pass a plow on the right – snowplows are equipped with “wing plows” which extend beyond the truck itself.**
- **Know where plows are and actions they may be taking while they plow snow.**

Further, motorists are reminded to make sure everyone in their vehicle wears a seat belt and children are in a car safety seat. They also should not use cruise control in wet or snowy weather, and they should keep a full gas tank.

For safe-driving tips and winter weather information, visit NDOT’s website, <http://dot.nebraska.gov/safety/driving/winter/>

As a reminder, the Nebraska State Patrol Highway Helpline is available 24 hours per day for motorists in need of assistance. Drivers can reach NSP by dialing *55 from any cell phone. Call 911 for any emergency.

Many Signals Communications