

NEBRASKA

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Pete Ricketts, Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NDOT Advises Caution While Traveling for Thanksgiving

November 25, 2019 (Lincoln, Neb.) — This week has the potential to bring three winter storm systems through the state, along with the likelihood of challenging conditions for Thanksgiving holiday travelers.

This Thanksgiving holiday weekend, the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) crews are prepared for the latest round of winter weather, which would impact most of the state and good portions of the country. While the forecast could fluctuate, concerns are highest with heavy snowfall coupled with high winds creating low visibility. Workers and equipment will be out to clear the highways and monitor changing conditions throughout the holiday weekend, which looks to affect travel Tuesday through Wednesday and again on Thanksgiving Day and through the weekend.

The first storm is expected to strike Tuesday and will impact travel on I-80 as well as the rest of Nebraska's highways. Motorists should expect travel conditions to deteriorate, including slushy and ice-covered roads, while significant snow falls across regions of Nebraska. High winds coupled with heavy snowfall will result in reduced visibility.

"This latest wave of storms looks to have significant impact on a majority of the state," said NDOT Director Kyle Schneweis. "This is the first major storm of the season and it is anticipated to be a significant one during one of the highest travel times of the year. Drivers are encouraged to be informed about weather and road conditions before making the decision to travel. We urge caution if you must travel during this winter storm and know before you go."

Travelers are advised 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 phone by, online at dot.nebraska.gov, Nebraska 511's smartphone app or by dialing 511.

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Travelers are also encouraged to utilize NDOT's Plow Tracker at <https://plows.nebraska.gov/index.html> where the public will be able to observe road conditions in real time from the cabs of NDOT snowplows. Please note that weather conditions are often worse than they appear on camera.

Should travel be absolutely necessary, NDOT reminds motorists to be prepared with warm clothing, water and food. Be sure to travel on well-established routes and notify someone when you are leaving for your destination. If traveling a distance, a winter weather survival kit is advised with additional basic items. 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 are urged to be cautious and courteous to those operating them, making sure to:

- Slow down as you approach plows. They travel slowly, usually 25-30 miles per hour 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.

Motorists are reminded to make sure everyone in their vehicle wears a seat belt and children are in a car safety seat. Do not use cruise control in wet or snowy weather and 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 NSP 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.

#NDOT#

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