

OCTOBER 2025 NEWSLETTER



NDOT WINTER TIM

During severe weather, the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) adjusts operations to maintain road safety and support efficient response. Coordinated public messaging is established between the National Weather Service (NWS), Nebraska State Patrol (NSP) and NDOT.



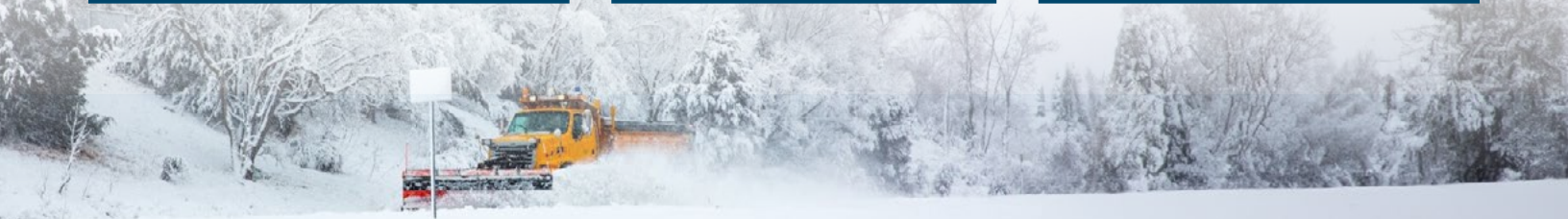
Nebraska 511, maintained by the State Operations Center (SOC), is an excellent tool for staying informed about weather, road conditions, hazards and more.



Nebraska's SOC operates 24/7 and can contact local staff for support requests.



Plowing operation times vary depending on the route, needs and available resources. Note: Plow locations are available on 511.



BEFORE THE STORM

NDOT will pre-message impending storm events to the public using dynamic message signs (DMS), the 511 website and social media.

Roadway Closures

NDOT, in collaboration with NSP, makes road closure decisions based on visibility, stalled vehicles and snow/ice removal capacity. Incorporated communities are responsible for snow removal within their limits. Rural roads may be deemed impassable rather than barricaded. Closure points adjust based on downstream capacity to avoid congestion and emergency sheltering needs.

DURING THE STORM

Responding to Issues

NDOT plows follow assigned routes and may not respond immediately to law enforcement requests. Reporting trouble spots helps NDOT prioritize. Various winter maintenance strategies and materials are used across the state. Materials designed to break ice bonds, rather than provide traction, are placed strategically, and some materials may not be available statewide.




Winter TIM Training Tip: While responding, maintain situational awareness; conditions can change rapidly, and visibility may be limited. Never trust approaching traffic in either direction and keep your head on a swivel. Plan an escape route and avoid pinch points, including standing between vehicles, or between a vehicle and guardrail or median barrier.

AFTER THE STORM

Interstate openings are staggered as traffic clears. **Please do not share when the interstate will open;** doing so causes ramp stacking and safety risks.

SNOW SQUALL WARNINGS AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

- ❄️ A **snow squall** is an intense but brief period of moderate to heavy snowfall, accompanied by strong, gusty surface winds and possibly lightning. Snow accumulation could be significant. The phenomenon is not new, but the term and warnings associated with it were only introduced in 2018.
- ❄️ Snow squalls differ from snowstorms in that they are much shorter in duration, but they also frequently include a phenomenon known as a flash freeze. Rapidly falling temperatures, combined with freshly fallen snow, can quickly glaze highways.
- ❄️ NWS began issuing warnings in 2018 because of the impact on travel, which frequently resulted in chain reaction crashes due to low visibility and flash-freeze road conditions. Snow squall warnings are issued for travelers, with the goal of giving drivers enough time to get off the road before the snow squall hits.
- ❄️ The warning is issued similarly to that of a severe thunderstorm; both are considered significant events, but they are brief (typically 30-60 minutes) and limited to a specific area. The NWS will not issue a snow squall warning if a blizzard warning has already been issued, or at night when the impact on traffic is lessened.



For more information on snow squall warnings, please see the **[“Impact-Based Snow Squall Warnings”](#)** fact sheet from NWS.

SEPTEMBER STATEWIDE VIRTUAL MEETING SUMMARY

The Nebraska TIM Statewide Virtual Meeting was held on September 23rd, bringing together participants from across the state to share state and national TIM best practices, discuss resources and strengthen the statewide network of TIM champions.

NDOT PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS ❄️

Cory Simmons, from the Nebraska OCIO Public Safety Communications team, shared practical insights into the challenges and solutions surrounding responder communications, how to troubleshoot patching issues and how to improve coordination during multi-agency incidents.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PANEL ❄️

A dynamic panel of emergency communications professionals (Mariá Scamehorn, Jessica Loos, Heidi Gillespie and Shelly Holzerland) provided a behind-the-scenes look at emergency communications during traffic incident response and emphasized the importance of TIM-trained operators in scene size-up and coordination with field responders.

STATEWIDE LEGISLATIVE UPDATES ❄️

Ryan Balluck and Matt Neemann from NDOT, along with Sgt. Justin Brase from NSP, provided an overview of recent legislative changes impacting roadway safety and responder protection. They encouraged agencies to review these updates and include them in training to ensure compliance and improve public awareness.

PROGRAM UPDATES ❄️

Bobbi Brooks shared information about ongoing activities and resources to stay involved in the TIM program.

Nebraska TIM: Safer, Together



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