



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
TRANSPORTATION CABINET
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Transportation Cabinet Crews Prepped for Winter Weather to Keep Kentuckians Moving Safely

Officials announce 'Name the Plow' program, submissions due Dec. 2

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Nov. 14, 2022) – In keeping with their priorities to promote safety in the commonwealth, the Beshear administration is taking extra measures this year to prepare for winter weather. November is traditionally the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet's (KYTC) snow and ice season launch, where more than 2,000 staff and crew members stand ready to keep roads passable for the safe movement of people and goods throughout the state. KYTC is also launching its first-ever "Name the Plow" program to foster community excitement when crews are out.

"Our crews have been on high alert, monitoring weather conditions to keep Kentuckians safe when snow and ice strike. Crews were dispatched Saturday for the first time this season in Western and Central Kentucky," Gov. Andy Beshear said. "As fall transitions to winter, we're thankful for their work to keep Kentucky drivers and their families safe, especially during the unusually harsh winter conditions we've seen in recent years."

For months, crews have been trained, salt and road treatment supplies have been restocked, plow trucks have been serviced and route plans have been updated. A fleet of 1,365 state-owned and contracted plow trucks is on deck to be deployed when needed. View a short video [here](#).

"Our crews are essential to keeping citizens and commerce moving in Kentucky," said KYTC Secretary Jim Gray. "While the severity and frequency of snow events are unknown, we are ready to act and do our best with the resources we have."

The cabinet has stockpiled over 300,000 tons of salt, nearly 1 million gallons of brine for anti-icing efforts and more than 1 million gallons of calcium chloride – an additive to salt for deicing.

KYTC uses a three-tier system to prioritize treatment and snow clearing on state-maintained routes. Route designations are based on factors such as traffic volume and connectivity to

critical services like hospitals. During routine snow and ice events, crews operate using snow and ice priority route maps for maximum equipment and materials usage efficiency. The cabinet has established a snow emergency plan for severe winter storm events to deploy resources within each county to cover the highest priority routes.

State Highway Engineer James Ballinger described what motorists can expect when plows are out.

“Like commercial trucks, our snow trucks have blind spots and tend to travel between 25 and 35 mph for optimal salting and plowing results,” said Ballinger. “Plows are not immune to the same dangers motorists face. By driving where the plow operator can see you, being patient and giving them room on the roads, you can help some of our most essential public servants make it home safely at the end of their shift.”

Kentucky’s fleet of snow-clearing vehicles includes nine tow plows in different parts of the state. Tow plows have a trailer-mounted rear plow that swings out to resemble a jackknifed truck. It allows one driver and a truck to clear two driving lanes in one pass. Two of the plows are housed in Frankfort for deployment wherever severe weather creates a need for increased support on wide, high-priority routes. Seven others are based in Graves, Grayson, Hardin, Lyon and McCracken counties.

KYTC maintains most roads, streets and bridges that are part of the State Highway System. Examples include interstates, parkways, and U.S. route designations.

Name the Plow

KYTC is introducing the first statewide Name the Plow program, offering drivers a chance to name one of 14 snow trucks in the state. One truck will be named in each of Kentucky's 12 highway districts and two tow plows from the Franklin County-based KYTC strike force. The name will be displayed on the vehicle so residents can see it while it’s out for pre-treating and plowing activities. Kentucky residents of all ages can submit names beginning Nov. 14 and running through Dec. 2 by completing this [online form](#). KYTC staff will vote on the winning names, and winners will be announced in early January. Entry rules are posted on the form.

“Many of our drivers live in the communities they serve and giving the public a chance to name a plow in their home county is a fun way to make the most of winter weather and showcase pride for our dedicated employees,” said Gray.

Driver Tips this Winter Season

Safe roadways are a shared responsibility, especially during inclement weather when risks increase. KYTC also encourages motorists to prepare for winter and remain safe by following these tips:

- Travel only when necessary during major snow events.
- Stock vehicles with ice scrapers, jumper cables, blankets, a flashlight, a cell phone charger, non-perishable snacks and a first aid kit should you get stranded on the road.
- Winterize your vehicle. Check your car battery, tire pressure and brakes. Ensure your heater, defroster, headlights and windshield wipers are working properly.
- When snow and/or ice are on roadways, drive slowly no matter what type of vehicle you drive. It takes more time and distance to stop your vehicle in poor weather, so brake early and slowly.

- Pay attention to weather advisories and allow more time to travel for routine commutes.
- Slow down when approaching intersections, off-ramps, bridges or shaded areas. These are all candidates for developing black ice – a thin coating of clear ice that can form on the pavement surface that may be difficult to see.
- Maintain a safe distance from snowplows and other heavy highway equipment, and do not pass snowplows on the shoulder.
- Know before you go. Download the free WAZE app or visit goky.ky.gov to check traffic conditions before you travel. The map also offers access to select traffic cameras on interstates and parkways.
- Eliminate distractions while driving, such as using a phone and or eating.

Visit snowky.ky.gov for snow and ice resources, like priority route maps, tips and highway district updates.

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