



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
TRANSPORTATION CABINET
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Andy Beshear
GOVERNOR

Jim Gray
SECRETARY

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Media Contact: Naitore Djigbenou
502.782.4829
Naitore.Djigbenou@ky.gov

State Transportation Crews Ready to Keep Kentucky Moving Safely This Winter Season

'Paint the Plow' student participants decorate trucks with safety messages

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Nov. 9, 2023) – State “snow fighter” highway crews are equipped, ready and waiting for winter in Kentucky. While supplies and staff are equipped, drivers are reminded to join the effort to keep roadways safe. To help, high school students from across Kentucky participated in the first statewide “Paint the Plows” program to elevate not only the look of select state trucks, but the message of safe driving behavior.

“Transportation safety has been a high priority throughout my administration,” said Gov. Andy Beshear. “Our snow fighters do everything in their power to keep our roadways passable, and it all starts with thorough preparation. While they do their part, we all have our role to play by getting vehicles winter-ready and being a safe driver behind the wheel.”

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) crews are restocked with:

- Over 1 million gallons of salt brine
- 1.1 million gallons of calcium chloride
- 340,000 tons of salt

More than 1,400 plow trucks are on deck and more than 2,000 staff and crew members are trained and prepped to keep travelers moving.

“We are ready for winter,” said KYTC Secretary Jim Gray. “Our crews work long and hard, year after year, to keep our roads as safe as possible. This year is no exception. We are grateful for our team of dedicated men and women who work on the front lines in hazardous conditions to keep fellow Kentuckians safe and commerce moving.”

KYTC uses a four-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.

Kentucky's fleet of snow-clearing vehicles includes twelve tow plows in different parts of the state. Tow plows have a trailer-mounted rear plow that swings out, like a jackknife. It allows one driver 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. Ten others are based in Christian, Graves, Grayson, Hardin, Henderson, Lyon and McCracken counties.

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

Inaugural "Paint the Plow" Participants

KYTC launched its first statewide "Paint the Plow" program this year open to participants from any Kentucky high school. A total of [52 schools participated](#), each painting a plow blade from their local Department of Highways district office.

"This year, you might notice decorative plow blades pushing snow in your communities thanks to talented high school students," said Secretary Gray. "They did a great job enhancing our trucks with unique, hand-painted art that features safe driving messages. It is a privilege to have our next generation reinforce responsible driving habits and build a sense of community pride when Kentuckians see our trucks out on the road."

Driver Tips This Winter Season

Safe roadways are a shared responsibility, especially during inclement weather when risks increase. Motorists, too, need 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 hard-to-see clear ice that can form on the pavement surface.
- 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.
- Buckle up! Phone down! Eliminate distractions while driving.

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

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Editors Note: [Click here](#) to view photographs of some participating plows. More will be added as they become available. [Click here](#) to view a video of some participating plows.

[Click here](#) for broll footage of KYTC crews in action.

