



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
TRANSPORTATION CABINET
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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‘Black Ice’ is Main Challenge for Kentucky Transportation Cabinet Crews Working Overnight on Roadways

Frigid temperatures mean refreezing of water on pavement

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Jan 6, 2022) – Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) snow and ice crews will be working on frozen roadways overnight, when “black ice” poses a particular hazard to motorists and the crews themselves.

Black ice, the result of water refreezing on pavement, is nearly impossible to see at night. Gov. Andy Beshear warned about it today when declaring a state of emergency because of a powerful winter storm that swept across Kentucky.

“All roadway surfaces will freeze. They are and will be extremely dangerous,” Gov. Beshear said. He urged the public to stay off the roadways so KYTC and local government road crews could do their work.

KYTC crews pretreated surfaces, including bridges and known slick spots in advance of the weather front, but accumulation occurred so quickly in many areas that roadways were covered shortly after being plowed. The weather caused dozens of crashes, many involving large trucks, that caused hours-long blockages of Interstates 64 and 75 and the Western Kentucky Parkway.

“It was a ‘perfect storm,’ literally,” Transportation Secretary Jim Gray said. “Heavy snowfall, combined with heavy, midday traffic and freezing pavement temperatures. The heavy traffic slowed many of our snowplows and salt trucks, and freezing pavement meant ice beneath the snow.

“Keeping roadways as safe as possible is one of the most important roles of the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, and that is never more important than in snow and ice season,” Secretary Gray said. “Our crews are doing the best they can, but they need the public’s cooperation and assistance. At the moment, that means staying off the road unless travel is absolutely necessary.”

The Cabinet’s snow and ice information website, www.snowky.ky.gov, provides details about priority routes, helpful winter weather tips, fact sheets and videos on salt application and snow removal.

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