



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
TRANSPORTATION CABINET
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Transportation Crews Deploy Ahead of New Snow Front

Part of Transportation Cabinet's mandate for safe highways, Gov. Andy Beshear says

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Jan 15, 2021) – Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) snowfighters deployed in various sections of the commonwealth today to get a jump on an approaching weather front bringing snow.

Forecasters warned of a squall-like system moving into western Kentucky early today and spreading eastward, beginning with rain and a few light snow showers but turning increasingly to snow toward evening with less than 1 inch accumulation over most of the state.

KYTC crews mainly were spot treating bridges and known slick spots. They also pretreated surfaces so that snow and ice would be easier to clear later.

“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,” said Gov. Andy Beshear.

“Part of the task is to get a jump on the weather whenever possible,” Transportation Secretary Jim Gray said. “Our crews are experienced. They know the usual trouble spots, and we monitor weather forecasts constantly.”

KYTC can call on nearly 2,000 frontline crews to maintain safe travel on state routes – a mission complicated by the ongoing novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

KYTC snowfighters spend several months every year training, stocking up on salt and road treatment supplies and making sure the cabinet’s 1,024 plow trucks are serviced and ready. This year, the cabinet’s proactive planning had to take into account the COVID-19 pandemic, which to date has killed more than 3,000 Kentuckians and has the potential for sidelining entire work crews.

“Snow and ice preparations begin long before the winter months and this year has been unique with a health crisis in play,” Secretary Gray said. “We’ve done our best to see around the corner by planning how to keep our work crews as protected as possible from COVID, and also how to adapt plans to cover for crews that suddenly have to be taken out of rotation because of COVID.

“We ask Kentuckians to partner with us by paying attention to weather advisories, limiting trips during poor weather conditions, and showing our crews grace as we make necessary

adjustments brought on by the pandemic. This is uncharted territory and we will get through this together,” Secretary Gray said.

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

Crews will follow healthy at work guidelines and maintenance facilities are closed to the public to minimize exposure. KYTC maintains the majority of roads, streets and bridges that are part of the State Highway System. Examples include interstates, parkways and U.S. route designations.

Keep Kentucky Moving Safely

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

- Travel only as necessary during major snow events. Stock vehicles with ice scrapers, jumper cables, blankets, a flashlight, cell phone charger, non-perishable snacks and first aid kit should you get stranded on the road.
- Winterize vehicles. Have your car battery, tire pressure and brakes checked. Make sure 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're in. It takes more time and distance to stop your vehicle in poor weather conditions, 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 (e.g. using phone and eating).
- Throughout the winter season, KYTC will be highlighting the men and women across the state who serve on the frontlines and behind the scenes of the Cabinet's snow and ice

removal efforts. Follow @KYTC and like us on facebook.com/kytc120. Follow your local KYTC Department of Highways district office on Twitter and Facebook for regional transportation updates. The Cabinet's snow and ice information website, 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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