

Eisenhower State Office Building
700 SW Harrison
Topeka, KS 66603



phone: 785-296-3585
fax: 785-368-7415
www.ksdot.org

Julie Lorenz, Secretary

Laura Kelly, Governor

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For more information:

Kim Stich

Kim.stich@ks.gov

Cold temperatures, blowing snow a concern for KDOT

TOPEKA - Weather forecasts show bitterly cold temperatures and several inches of snow are expected in areas across the state from today to Monday night. The Kansas Department of Transportation encourages the public to limit travel because these conditions can be dangerous for motorists as well as cause issues for highway workers who are working to clear the roads.

For motorists who get stuck, frost bite can happen much quicker with the cold air and wind chills, especially for those not prepared. Making sure a winter supply kit is fully stocked in all vehicles is important. A few basic items include blankets, flashlight, batteries, snacks, water, first-aid kit, ice scraper, jumper cables and sand/kitty litter for traction.

“For the safety of both motorists and our workers, we would encourage the public to limit travel,” said KDOT Emergency Management Coordinator Jim Frye. “These conditions can be life-threatening for travelers.”

With the extremely low temperatures, dry snow will likely blow across the roadways with wind gusts of 20 mph or more predicted during this time. Blowing snow also can reduce visibility even more at night.

“Crews will clear the highways, but winds will blow the snow back, making it more difficult and time consuming for our crews to do their jobs efficiently,” Frye said.

Due to the extreme cold, the effectiveness of liquid salt brines and granular salts is diminished significantly and hinders the melting process on bridges and roadways. In addition, any snow or ice melting that does occur could result in refreeze within minutes.

Current forecasts show snow likely in the northern part of Kansas today and Saturday, the western third of the state receiving snow on Saturday night and Sunday and a risk of snow on Monday in the southern half of the state. These conditions will continue to develop – please check local weather forecasts regularly for updates and changes.

Check KDOT's traveler information website, KanDrive, that is updated 24/7 for current Kansas road conditions. The website is www.KanDrive.org.

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