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KDOT crews prepared for winter storm

A blizzard warning is in effect beginning late tonight for northwest Kansas and the Kansas Department of Transportation road crews are prepared for the storm.

Road crews have been assigned to cover areas targeted to be hit by the severe storm expected by late tonight or tomorrow. Heavy snow accumulations and blizzard conditions are expected all day tomorrow, with conditions diminishing on Saturday.

"We are ready for the storm," said Joe Finley, KDOT Northwest District Maintenance Engineer. "We have prepared our trucks and road supplies and road crews are scheduled for around the clock. Due to the predicted rain first, crews will not be pre-treating roads."

The National Weather Service expects the storm to be severe, with widespread blizzard conditions creating dangerous if not impossible travel conditions along I-70 and in the northwest region of the State on Friday and Saturday. Winds gusting to 50 mph are expected to produce white-out conditions. A winter storm watch is also in effect for Norton, Sheridan, Graham and Gove counties from Friday evening through Saturday afternoon, with severe weather expected in this area also. Heavy rain is expected in east central, north central and northeast Kansas on Friday, changing to sleet and snow by late Friday or early Saturday, with accumulating snow possible from Friday night to Saturday night and ending by Sunday morning.

The Kansas Department of Transportation is advising motorists who must travel to monitor weather and road conditions before traveling by taking advantage of KDOT's free traveler information services:

- Visit **KanDrive**, www.kandrive.org, KDOT's traveler information gateway for Kansas and surrounding states, to get enhanced camera views. Camera snapshots of the roadway are updated every few minutes from closed-circuit cameras installed along I-70 and other highways. Live motion camera views have been added for many cameras along I-70 between Goodland and west of Topeka.

In addition to the camera tour, KanDrive provides: an interactive map of Kansas roads, work zones and other events impacting traffic and surface-related road conditions; roadside message sign views; and links to related helpful transportation resources, such as neighboring states' travel information, Kansas Turnpike information, Kansas Byways and more.

RSS feeds and Geo RSS feeds are also available for roadwork activities and weather conditions by selecting the links in the lower left corner on the 511 map page (<http://511.ksdot.org>). You may also subscribe to the feeds that are automatically downloaded to your computer.

Links are also provided to metro traffic information websites for Kansas City (KC Scout) and Wichita (WICHway), the new website for Wichita metro traffic information.

- The **511 Mobile** site at <http://511mm.ksdot.org> now provides map, camera and electronic message sign views, road conditions, work zone and event information and links to weather. All content is provided by six regions across the state and three metropolitan areas (Kansas City, Topeka and Wichita).

The site is accessible from multiple devices, including iPhones, Droids and Windows mobile devices, Version 6.0 and higher. Any devices not compatible with the new application will be able to access text information only for road conditions and work zones.

- **511 Phone** - From any phone anytime, travelers may call 5-1-1 from anywhere in Kansas or 1-866-511-KDOT (5368) from anywhere in the U.S. to get route-specific road conditions, work zone information, including detours and closed roads, and

travel-related weather information and emergency advisories to plan their trips or for updates as they travel.

KDOT also reminds those who must travel in these conditions to take extra precautions, including making sure to have a fully charged cell phone, a filled tank of fuel and a survival kit in your vehicle.

A basic survival kit can be a life-saver in the event of a mechanical breakdown or if you are stranded during a winter storm. The kit should contain a blanket or sleeping bag; nonperishable food; water; flashlight and extra batteries; matches or a lighter; candles; warm coat, gloves, hat or cap and insulated footwear; and a small first aid kit. Other supplies should include a snow shovel; ice scraper/snow brush; sand or traction mats; flares/reflectors; jumper cables; a good spare tire, lug wrench and jack.

Learn more about how to prepare for safe winter travel by visiting [this link](#) on KDOT's website or [on Facebook](#).

"It's also important that travelers prepare for safe winter driving by remembering safe winter driving skills such as reducing their speed for conditions and allowing extra time to travel," Finley said. "Turn off your cruise control, allow extra distance between your vehicle and the vehicle ahead of you, and don't follow snow removal equipment too closely. Accelerate and brake gently to reduce the chance of losing control of your vehicle."

Drivers should use basic safe driving habits at any time of the year – buckling up and safely securing children in safety seats, driving alert and sober, operating your vehicle at a safe and legal speed, and avoiding driver distractions such as talking or texting on your cell phone.

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