



**For Northeast Kansas
as of 4:30 a.m. CST
Friday, December 25, 2009**

DANGEROUS WINTER STORM ALERT for Thursday, December 24 through Friday, December 25!

Per the National Weather Service: "Stay inside and enjoy Christmas!" Travel is strongly discouraged from Thursday evening overnight through Friday morning. Travel will be dangerous to nearly impossible throughout all of Northeast Kansas (including Topeka/Lawrence Metro and Kansas City Metro Areas). Blizzard-like conditions including blowing and falling snow will make driving hazardous and visibility limited.

REMEMBER Drivers: Stay SAFE, stay off the roads, stay inside!

From Oklahoma DOT: Travel throughout Oklahoma discouraged. Interstates gridlocked with collisions in OKC metro. The interstates and turnpikes in Oklahoma were shut down earlier this evening due to ongoing blizzard conditions.

Lots of vehicles still sliding off and getting stuck in drifts all across NE Kansas. Drivers need to stay home and stay off the road!

Approximately 7,584 Topekans still have no power. Crews are working to restore power.

Current Weather Forecast:

Northeast Kansas, including Topeka/Lawrence Metro Area

Christmas Day: Snow likely and areas of blowing snow. Cloudy, with a high near 19. Wind chill values between -7 and 1. Windy, with a west wind between 25 and 30 mph, with gusts as high as 40 mph. Chance of precipitation is 70%. Total daytime snow accumulation of around an inch possible.

Tonight: A 50 percent chance of snow. Cloudy, with a low around 14. Wind chill values between -3 and 2. Breezy, with a west wind between 20 and 25 mph, with gusts as high as 35 mph.

BLIZZARD WARNING

MARSHALL-NEMAHA-BROWN-POTTAWATOMIE-JACKSON-JEFFERSON-WABAUNSEE-SHAWNEE-DOUGLAS-LYON-OSAGE-FRANKLIN-COFFEY-ANDERSON-INCLUDING THE CITIES OF: MARYSVILLE...HIAWATHA...TOPEKA...LAWRENCE...EMPORIA...OTTAWA.

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN TOPEKA HAS ISSUED A BLIZZARD WARNING WHICH REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL 6 PM CST FRIDAY.

Timing...heavy snow will continue through the night.

Total snow accumulations...snowfall accumulations of 6 to 10 inches will be possible by Friday afternoon...with locally higher amounts possible.

Wind...north wind will increase to 35 to 40 mph with gusts as high as 50 mph tonight and Friday. This will result in reduced visibility under one quarter mile to near zero at times with blizzard conditions.

Wind chill...wind chill readings will be from five to fifteen below zero on Friday.

Impacts...travel will become extremely difficult tonight through Friday. Drifting of snow across roadways is likely.

Precautionary/preparedness actions...remember...a blizzard warning means severe winter weather conditions are imminent or highly likely. Any travel is strongly discouraged. If you leave the safety of being indoors...you are putting your life at risk.

Greater Kansas City Metro Area

Christmas Day: Snow likely and widespread blowing snow. Cloudy, with a high near 20. Wind chill values between -6 and 2. Blustery, with a west northwest wind between 24 and 26 mph, with gusts as high as 37 mph. Chance of precipitation is 70%. Total daytime snow accumulation of 1 to 3 inches possible.

Tonight: Snow likely. Cloudy, with a low around 18. Wind chill values between zero and 5. Breezy, with a west wind between 20 and 25 mph, with gusts as high as 33 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60%. New snow accumulation of less than one inch possible.

BLIZZARD WARNING - REVISED

ATCHISON KS-MIAMI-LINN KS-DONIPHAN-LEAVENWORTH-WYANDOTTE-JOHNSON KS-ATCHISON MO-NODAWAY-HOLT-ANDREW-DE KALB-BUCHANAN-CLINTON-PLATTE-CLAY-JACKSON-CASS-BATES-INCLUDING THE CITIES OF...ATCHISON...PAOLA...MOUND CITY...TROY...LEAVENWORTH...OVERLAND PARK...OLATHE...TARKIO...MARYVILLE...OREGON...SAVANNAH...CAMERON...ST. JOSEPH...PLATTSBURG...PARKVILLE...PLATTE CITY...WESTON...LIBERTY...EXCELSIOR SPRINGS...KANSAS CITY...INDEPENDENCE...RAYMORE...HARRISONVILLE...PLEASANT HILL...BUTLER...RICH HILL.

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN KANSAS CITY/PLEASANT HILL HAS ISSUED A BLIZZARD WARNING WHICH REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL 6 PM CST FRIDAY.

Precipitation has transitioned to all snow across the area overnight...after a mix of sleet and snow last evening. Thus far...snow accumulations have ranged from around 3 inches across the eastern portions of the warned area...to around 6 inches across parts of eastern Kansas and western and northwest Missouri.

The heaviest snow...with rates approaching 2 inches per hour...has moved east of the interstate 35 corridor...however light to moderate snow will continue into the sunrise hour. Light snowfall is expected into the afternoon hours...especially across northeast Kansas and far northwest Missouri...where an additional several more inches is expected. Total snowfall accumulations through Friday afternoon will range from around 5 to 10 inches across the area.

Strong northwest to west winds will persist through this afternoon... With sustained winds of 25 to 30 mph and gusts as high as 40 to 45 mph. Extensive blowing and drifting snow...visibilities reduced to one quarter mile or less...and blizzard conditions will continue. Reports have indicated snow drifts in excess of three feet in places already...with the potential for more significant drifting through the morning hours. Interstate 29 is closed from mound city Missouri north to the Iowa border...due to dangerous white out conditions and significant drifting snow...and other state and local highways may also become impassible.

Travel has become extremely dangerous and will continue into the daylight hours. Periods of light snow with significantly reduced visibilities in blowing and drifting snow is expected. Travel is not recommended this morning.

Precautionary/preparedness actions...a blizzard warning means severe winter weather conditions are expected or occurring. Falling and blowing snow with strong winds and poor visibilities are likely. This will lead to whiteout

conditions...making travel extremely dangerous. Do not travel. If you must travel...have a winter survival kit with you. If you get stranded...stay with your vehicle.

Current Road Conditions

Snow continues to fall and blow throughout all of northeast Kansas. KDOT crews are on the roadways treating and plowing constantly. However due to the blowing/gusting winds, heavy falling snow and the dropping temps, drifting is a huge problem and it is proving to be extremely difficult to get roadways cleared and keep them that way. It will be this way throughout the overnight hours and into the day tomorrow. Several NE Kansas highways are NOW CLOSED (see below) and we will probably see more closed before the winter storm is over. See the chart below for current roadway conditions for individual northeast Kansas counties.

Driver Safety Tips

Please remind DRIVERS if they must travel about tonight and tomorrow to:

1. Take it SLOW!
2. Allow plenty of extra drive time.
3. Watch for icy/slick spots on the roadway; don't assume that if the pavement looks clear, that it is.
4. Buckle up every passenger, every time.
5. If they get stranded, to stay with their vehicle and call *47 on a state highway/interstate route (any highway that begins with I-, K-, and US-), *KTA on the Kansas Turnpike, or #911 at anytime.

For travel throughout the evening and overnight hours, drivers should use extreme caution, allow plenty of driving time, buckle up (every passenger, every time) and be sure to turn on their headlights, and turn off their cruise control. Drivers should also provide for a safe distance or cushion between themselves and vehicles ahead of them.

We also want to remind drivers to stay a safe distance back from KDOT snow plows, and if drivers should pass the snow plows, to be extra careful and allow plenty of room as the trucks do travel slower than surrounding traffic.

COUNTY/METRO AREA	CURRENT OVERALL ROAD CONDITIONS	New Update Yes/No
KC Metro Area (Johnson/Leavenworth/Wyandotte Counties)	Mostly to Completely Snowpacked/Ice	No
Topeka Metro Area (Shawnee County)	Completely Snowpacked/Ice	No
Atchison County	Drifting	No
Brown County	Drifting	No
Doniphan County	Drifting	No
Douglas County	Completely Snowpacked/Ice	No
Jackson County	Partly Snowpacked/Ice	Yes
Jefferson County	Completely Snowpacked/Ice	No
Lyon County	Completely Snowpacked/Ice	No
Marshall County	Spots to Completely Snowpacked/Ice	Yes
Nemaha County	Drifting	No
Osage County	Completely Snowpacked/Ice	No
Pottawatomie County	Completely Snowpacked/Ice	No
Riley County	Mostly Snowpacked/Ice	No
Wabaunsee County	Completely Snowpacked/Ice	No

Current Road Closures

K-16 in Pottawatomie County is closed as of 12:30 a.m., Friday, Dec. 25, from the city of Blaine to the City of Wheaton due to blowing and drifting snow which is causing the roadway to be impassable for drivers. **NEW!**

K-20 in Doniphan & Brown Counties is closed as of 11:30 p.m. from the US-73 Junction to the K-7 Junction due to blowing and drifting snow which is causing the roadway to be impassable for drivers.

K-87 in Marshall County is closed from VILLAGE OF VLIETS to the junction of US-36/K-87 as of 3:30 a.m. on Friday, December 25, due to blowing and drifting snow which is causing the roadway to be impassable for drivers.

K-99 in Marshall County is closed as of 11 p.m. from the junction of K-99/US-36 and 234 to the Kansas/Nebraska state line, snow has drifted the road shut. The roadway is impassable at this time due to blowing and drifting snow.

K-110 in Marshall County is closed from the junction of US-36/K-110 to south city limits of AXTELL as of 3:30 a.m. on Friday, December 25, due to blowing and drifting snow which is causing the roadway to be impassable for drivers.

K-120 in Doniphan County is closed from the junction of K-20/K-120 to the south city limits of Highland as of 3:30 a.m. on Friday, December 25, due to blowing and drifting snow which is causing the roadway to be impassable for drivers.

K-187 in Nemaha County is closed from the junction of K-9/K-187 to the junction of US-36/K-187 as of 3:30 a.m. on Friday, December 25, due to blowing and drifting snow which is causing the roadway to be impassable for drivers.

K-246 in Brown County is closed from the US-75 junction to the west city limits of Morrill as of 3:30 a.m. on Friday, December 25, due to blowing and drifting snow which is causing the roadway to be impassable for drivers.

Updated Road Conditions (via phone or online 24/7)

Updated Kansas road conditions are at your fingertips. **New!! KanDrive** is the new online travel info portal, www.KanDrive.org, that displays information from KDOT's traveler information technology, including highway cameras, dynamic message signs, traffic management centers and 511 phone, online and mobile (<http://511mm.ksdot.org>). Snapshots from more than 30 closed-circuit cameras along I-70 between Topeka and Colorado and along other highways in the state, as well as camera views from the KC Scout system are available through the new online site, so users can see the roadway conditions.

Travelers can also obtain updated road conditions simply by calling 511 from any phone (landline or cellular), or by clicking on the following link: <http://511.ksdot.org>, drivers can obtain updated all of Kansas road conditions at **anytime, day or night.**

Additional weather-related information can be found online at <http://www.ksdot.org/offTransInfo/511Info/511traffictavel.asp>. This KDOT web site link includes informational brochures on 511 Winter Storm Survival, Managing Snow and Ice on Kansas Highways, and Safe Winter Driving Tips. Drivers...“If the weather is bad, remember with ICE AND SNOW, Take it Slow, or just don't go.”

Media Outlets

For more information and/or to schedule an interview (live/pre-recorded), you can reach me 24/7 on my cell phone at (785) 640-9340 (early morning/overnight, evenings, and weekends included).

Thanks for your continued support! Be safe, don't text & drive. Know B4 U Go!

Kimberly K. Qualls
NE Kansas Public Affairs Manager
Kansas Dept. of Transportation
121 SW 21st Street
Topeka, KS 66612

P: (785) 296-3881

C: (785) 640-9340

kqualls@ksdot.org

www.ksdot.org

www.kandrive.org

Follow KDOT on Twitter (www.twitter.com):

Topeka/Lawrence Metro Area: @TopekaMetroKDOT

Kansas City Metro Area: @KansasCityKDOT

NE Kansas: @NEKansasKDOT