

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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KDOT is preparing for winter weather

Most people in the state are hoping for less snow this winter, but regardless of what Mother Nature has in store, the Kansas Department of Transportation has done its best to be prepared. Parts of Kansas have already received some snow, and more is expected this week.

Field employees have conducted snow and ice training during October, routine maintenance on vehicles and equipment has taken place and all of KDOT storage facilities across the state are filled with a total of about 200,000 tons of salt and sand, according to KDOT Maintenance Bureau Chief Clay Adams.

“It’s important to review procedures like making salt brine, putting on tire chains and loading materials as well as basic snow and ice removal operations,” Adams said. “Whether it’s a harsh or mild winter, KDOT wants to be ready to go.”

KDOT uses salt brine in three ways.

“Spraying salt brine on bridge decks helps keep frost from forming on cold damp mornings,” Adams said. “Using salt brine to prewet salt as it’s being dispersed from the trucks can be very effective by putting a coating of brine around the salt, which helps the salt stick to the pavement and activates the salt so it can melt the ice. Treating roads with brine prior to a snowstorm will help prevent the snow from sticking to the pavement.”

Salt brine is not effective if it’s extremely cold, windy or predicted to be a dry snow. However, in specific situations, salt brine helps in the remove of reduce snow and ice on highway surfaces and makes it easier to plow the snow, Adams said.

While KDOT crews are focused on their efforts to clear the highways, KDOT Director of Safety Catherine Patrick reminds motorists to never pass a snowplow on the right side, slow down and use caution. Numerous KDOT trucks have been struck by motorists in years' past, which puts people in danger and takes trucks out of commission. In fact, in February, five snowplows were hit in the Kansas City metro area in less than 24 hours.

“Check the forecast before you leave if there’s inclement weather. And when you see our crews out there working, please give them plenty of room,” Patrick said. “We’ll be out there day and night treating the highways and working to clear the roads as quickly as possible.”

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