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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **KDOT crews ready for snow**

With snow in the forecast later this week, the Kansas Department of Transportation is ready.

This year KDOT has implemented new snow fighter training courses to better educate new equipment operators on all aspects of roadway snow and ice control as well as how to maintain their equipment.

KDOT has a staff of 1,200 ready for winter weather, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; they have taken their dry runs and have stored 200,000 tons of salt in preparation for this Kansas winter.

Last winter, KDOT spent more than \$22 million and used 128,000 tons of salt to clear the state's highways while plowing approximately 2.8 million miles, effectively plowing the 25,000-mile state system more than 110 times.

"We are constantly fine tuning KDOT's operation based on what we learned last year," said Peter Carttar, Assistant Bureau Chief of Maintenance. "We are always working to improve what we do."

KDOT joins with other state and local agencies to enhance the safety of travelers before, during and after the storm.

One of the best ways to stay safe on the road over the next few days and during the upcoming holiday travel period is to know the conditions before venturing out. There are a variety of ways to get updated information about road conditions in Kansas. Travelers can obtain route-specific road conditions and weather by calling 5-1-1 within

the state or (866) 511- 5368 from out of state. The same information and more can be obtained by visiting the KanDrive website, <http://www.kandrive.org>, which also has maps, camera views of many routes and more, and the 511 mobile text only site, <http://511mm.ksdot.org>.

Those planning to travel during or after the storm should follow these safety tips:

- Completely clean frost and snow off all windows, mirrors, and lights, and use headlights to provide optimum visibility.
- Slow down, accelerate and brake gently, and increase following distance between other vehicles.
- Don't use cruise control.
- Allow for more travel time.
- Always wear a seat belt, and secure children in the proper child safety seats.
- Slow down and move over for stopped emergency vehicles and maintenance crews.
- If involved in a non-injury crash on an interstate, U.S. highway, or any divided or multi-lane road in the state of Kansas, and if you are not transporting hazardous materials, you are required by law to move your vehicle out of the lane of traffic. This law is intended to help keep drivers and passengers safe by getting them out of the lane of traffic and away from oncoming vehicles.
- If possible, remain in your vehicle, and remain buckled up, that way if a crash would occur involving your car or another vehicle nearby, you are more protected than if you are out in the roadway or even on the shoulder.
- If involved in a traffic crash, or need assistance, call 911, or contact the Kansas Highway Patrol at \*47 (\*HP) from a cell phone. Call \*582 (\*KTA) on the Kansas Turnpike.

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