



**For Northeast Kansas
as of 5:00 p.m. CST
Thursday, December 24, 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 early this evening 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. Stay SAFE, stay off the roads, stay inside!

Current Weather Forecast:

Northeast Kansas, including Topeka/Lawrence Metro Area

Late Afternoon: Snow and areas of blowing snow. Steady temperature around 22. Windy, with a north wind around 30 mph, with gusts as high as 40 mph. Chance of precipitation is 100%. Total daytime snow accumulation of 1 to 3 inches possible.

Tonight: Snow and widespread blowing snow. The snow could be heavy at times. Low around 13. Wind chill values between -1 and -6. Windy, with a north wind between 30 and 35 mph, with gusts as high as 45 mph. Chance of precipitation is 100%. New snow accumulation of 4 to 8 inches possible.

Christmas Day: Snow likely and areas of blowing snow. Cloudy, with a high near 20. Wind chill values between -7 and 2. Windy, with a west wind between 25 and 30 mph, with gusts as high as 40 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60%. New snow accumulation of less than a half inch possible.

Friday Night: A 40 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 30 mph.

BLIZZARD WARNING – NEW!

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 IS IN EFFECT UNTIL 6 PM CST FRIDAY. THE WINTER STORM WARNING HAS BEEN CANCELED.

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

Late Afternoon: Periods of snow and sleet. Steady temperature around 30. Blustery, with a north northwest wind around 23 mph, with gusts as high as 33 mph. Chance of precipitation is 90%. Total daytime snow and sleet accumulation of less than a half inch possible.

Tonight: Occasional snow and widespread blowing snow. Low around 17. Wind chill values between -2 and 8. Windy, with a north northwest wind between 25 and 31 mph, with gusts as high as 41 mph. Chance of precipitation is 100%. New snow accumulation of 3 to 7 inches possible.

Christmas Day: Snow likely and areas of blowing snow. Cloudy, with a high near 22. Wind chill values between -2 and 6. Blustery, with a west northwest wind between 22 and 28 mph, with gusts as high as 37 mph. Chance of precipitation is 70%. New snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches possible.

Friday Night: A chance of snow. Cloudy, with a low around 19. Breezy, with a west wind between 17 and 22 mph, with gusts as high as 31 mph. Chance of precipitation is 40%.

BLIZZARD WARNING – NEW!

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 IS IN EFFECT UNTIL 6 PM CST FRIDAY. THE WINTER STORM WARNING HAS BEEN CANCELLED.

Precipitation has transitioned to all snow across areas along and west of a St. Joseph to Maryville line while a mix of freezing rain...sleet and snow is occurring east of this line. A transition to snow with occasional sleet mixing at times will take place late this afternoon becoming all snow tonight.

Snow will increase in coverage and intensity tonight as the storm system approaches. Snow and blowing snow will likely continue into Friday morning with total snowfall accumulations through Friday afternoon ranging from 5 to 8 inches from Butler Missouri and Pleasanton Kansas northward to the Kansas City metro. North of this...snow accumulations may be in the 7 to 10 inch range.

Strong northwest to west winds are developing and will persist through Friday...with sustained winds of 25 to 30 mph with gusts of 35 to 40 mph. This will create extensive blowing and drifting snow with blizzard conditions.

Travel will be extremely dangerous through the overnight hours and into tomorrow morning. Very difficult travel conditions are expected through Friday...with periods of blowing snow significantly reducing visibilities to less than one quarter mile at times. Persons planning on traveling for the holiday should consider making alternative plans.

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 is now falling throughout all of northeast Kansas. KDOT crews are on the roadways treating and plowing. Though due to the blowing/gusting winds, continued falling snow and the dropping temps, it is going to be extremely difficult to get roadways cleared and keep them that way overnight and throughout the day tomorrow. *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.

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)	Wet/Slush	Yes
Topeka Metro Area (Shawnee County)	Mostly to Completely Snowpacked/Ice	Yes
Atchison County	Completely Snowpacked/Ice	Yes
Brown County	Completely Snowpacked/Ice	Yes
Doniphan County	Completely Snowpacked/Ice	Yes
Douglas County	Mostly Snowpacked/Ice	Yes
Jackson County	Completely Snowpacked/Ice	Yes
Jefferson County	Mostly to Completely Snowpacked/Ice	Yes
Lyon County	Completely Snowpacked/Ice	Yes
Marshall County	Spots Snowpacked/Ice	Yes
Nemaha County	Completely Snowpacked/Ice	Yes
Osage County	Completely Snowpacked/Ice	Yes
Pottawatomie County	Completely Snowpacked/Ice	Yes
Riley County	Spots to Mostly Snowpacked/Ice	Yes
Wabaunsee County	Mostly to Completely Snowpacked/Ice	Yes

Current Road Closures

No road closures to report at this time.

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/511traffictravel.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