

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 25, 2021

Motorists Advised to Limit Travel, Watch for Changing Conditions *Vehicle Restrictions Planned for This Evening*

Harrisburg, PA – In anticipation of frozen precipitation and potentially icy roadway conditions in many areas, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) is advising motorists to avoid all unnecessary travel during the upcoming storm. PennDOT plans to implement travel restrictions on trucks and other vehicles on certain roadways around the state, which will remain in place until conditions warrant their removal.

Effective 7:00 PM this evening, vehicle restrictions will begin [Tier 1 of the commonwealth's weather event vehicle restriction plan](#) on the following roadways:

- Interstate 70 in both directions from the Pennsylvania Turnpike (Interstate 76) to the Maryland state line;
- Pennsylvania Turnpike (Interstate 76) between the New Stanton and Breezewood interchanges;
- The entire length of Interstate 83 in both directions; and
- The entire length of Interstate 99 in both directions.

Effective 10:00 PM this evening, vehicle restrictions will begin Tier 1 of the commonwealth's weather event vehicle restriction plan on Interstate 80 from Interstate 79 to Interstate 81.

Under Tier 1 restrictions, the following vehicles are **not permitted** on affected roadways:

- Tractors without trailers;
- Tractors towing unloaded or lightly loaded enclosed trailers, open trailers or tank trailers;
- Tractors towing unloaded or lightly loaded tandem trailers;
- Enclosed cargo delivery trucks that meet the definition of a CMV;
- Passenger vehicles (cars, SUV's, pickup trucks, etc.) towing trailers;
- Recreational vehicles/motorhomes;
- School buses, commercial buses and motor coaches not carrying chains or Alternate Traction Devices (ATD's); and
- motorcycles.

Speed limits would be restricted to 45 mph on these roadways for all vehicles while the vehicle restrictions are in place, and commercial vehicles not affected by the bans must move to the right lane, unless work zone signage indicates otherwise. Additional speed restrictions on other interstates could be added depending on changing conditions.

Restrictions will be communicated via variable message boards, the 511PA traveler information website at www.511pa.com and smartphone apps. Motorists can also sign up for alerts on www.511pa.com by clicking on "Personal Alerts" in the left-hand menu.

Icy conditions are expected in many areas, and PennDOT urges motorists to avoid travel if possible. But if travel is necessary, use caution, reduce speeds and be aware of changing weather conditions. PennDOT has been pre-treating roadways to help prevent ice from forming a bond with the pavement during the early stages of a storm. However, salt is not a silver bullet, and drivers may encounter icy spots on the roadway. With freezing temperatures, roads that look wet may actually be icy, and extra caution is needed when approaching bridges and highway ramps where ice can form without warning.

To help make decisions regarding winter travel, motorists are encouraged to "Know Before You Go" by checking conditions on more than 40,000 roadway miles, including color-coded winter conditions on 2,900 miles, by visiting www.511PA.com. 511PA, which is free and available 24 hours a day, provides traffic delay warnings, weather forecasts, traffic speed information and access to more than 1,000 traffic cameras. Users can also see plow truck statuses and travel alerts along a specific route using the "Check My Route" tool.

511PA is also available through a smartphone application for iPhone and Android devices, by calling 5-1-1, or by following regional Twitter alerts accessible on the 511PA website.

Drivers should prepare or restock their emergency kits with items such as non-perishable food, water, first-aid supplies, warm clothes, a blanket, cell phone charger and a small snow shovel. Motorists should tailor their kits to any specific needs that they or their families have such as baby supplies, extra medication and pet supplies.

When winter weather occurs, drivers should be extra cautious around operating snow-removal equipment. When encountering a plow truck, drivers should:

- Stay at least six car lengths behind an operating plow truck and remember that the main plow is wider than the truck.
- Be alert since plow trucks generally travel much more slowly than other traffic.
- When a plow truck is traveling toward you, move as far away from the center of the road as is safely possible, and remember that snow can obscure the actual snow plow width.
- Never try to pass or get between several trucks plowing side by side in a "plow train." The weight of the snow thrown from the plow can quickly cause smaller vehicles to lose control, creating a hazard for nearby vehicles.
- Never travel next to a plow truck since there are blind spots where the operator can't see, and they can occasionally be moved sideways when hitting drifts or heavy snowpack.
- Keep your lights on to help the operator better see your vehicle. Also remember that under Pennsylvania state law, vehicle lights must be on every time a vehicle's wipers are on due to inclement weather.

Last winter in Pennsylvania, preliminary data shows that there were 151 crashes resulting in three fatalities and 81 injuries on snowy, slushy or ice-covered roadways where aggressive driving behaviors such as speeding or making careless lane changes were factors.

For more information on safe winter travel, an emergency kit checklist and information on PennDOT's winter operations including a video, visit www.PennDOT.gov/winter. Additional winter driving and other highway safety information is available at www.PennDOT.gov/safety.

Follow the conversation by using #PAWinter on Twitter at www.twitter.com/PennDOTNews and visit the department on Facebook at www.facebook.com/PennsylvaniaDepartmentofTransportation.