



## Georgia DOT Winter 2015 Weather Preparedness

Georgia DOT's Winter Weather Response Plan focuses on proactive and preventive efforts.

Much of the plan includes strategies learned from research and peer exchanges with other state DOTs. Many initiatives have been implemented as a result of this research. They include:

- Several contractors have signed agreements and are ready to join GDOT to address hazardous winter precipitation.
- The Department's first priority is to keep the Interstate System open and passable for emergency responders and essential travel. GDOT maintenance forces will treat all lanes on the interstates. However, depending on the severity of the storm, some lanes may be closed.
- Second priority is the highest volume state routes. This focus is on the most traveled routes first, keeping them open for emergency travel. Two-lane state routes could be closed to traffic until they are safe; or cities and counties can choose to work on those roadways.
- Nine new material storage locations have been added - for a total of 30 - to allow for quicker, targeted and continuous response where needed.
- Our stockpile of materials has increased statewide to allow for heavier applications of salt and stone through longer events, if needed.
- Three multi-lane snow plows have been added - for a total of 5.
- A Brine Pre-treatment Program has been added for metro Atlanta:
  - Brine treatment - a mixture of salt and water is used as a preventative treatment and to limit the bonding of the ice to the pavement
  - Ten 5000-gallon tankers are available to apply brine treatment to the interstates
  - Automated brine production unit that includes 100,000 gallon storage unit will be in place in December 2014
  - Routes include I-285; all interstate routes inside I-285; and portions of interstate routes outside I-285.
- A coordination plan with local governments is in place to share information. GDOT is working collaboratively to strategically pool resources and response.
- GDOT outreach efforts include utilizing our existing website; changeable message signs (CMS) along our transportation network; coordinating with Outdoor Advertising Association of Georgia (OAAG) to distribute messages on electronic billboards; and posting on Facebook and Twitter.
- Multi-agency response plan includes:
  - Enhanced GIS equipment tracking to ensure clear knowledge of locations being treated
  - Web-based program to monitor incidents
  - Snow removal equipment operators equipped with a communication device to share real time conditions with their Area and District Storm Operations Center.

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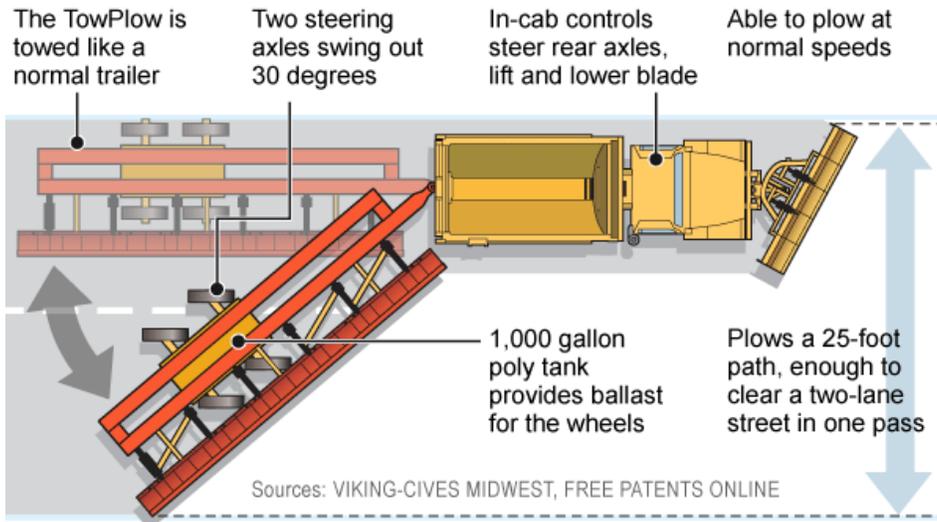
- More than 2,100 Georgia DOT maintenance and construction employees are available for active duty across the state. District resources will move as needed to assist in affected areas.
- Georgia DOT maintains a staging area in most counties. These county maintenance buildings each stockpile salt, fine stone, fuel and supplies needed for emergencies.
- Georgia DOT's Highway Emergency Response Operators (HEROs) – sponsored by State Farm - will monitor traffic along I-85, I-75, I-20, I-285, GA 400, I-675 and I-575 in the metro Atlanta area to assist motorists with vehicle trouble and to help clear incidents and stalls from the roadway.
- In the metro Atlanta area, traffic operators at the Transportation Management Center in southeast Atlanta will constantly monitor traffic cameras along the interstates looking for signs that roads are icing; they will relay those locations to the maintenance office. Traffic operators will take calls from metro Atlanta motorists through the 511 system, sponsored by State Farm.
- Communications personnel across the state will be at the Transportation Management Center and the district offices to provide constant updates to the media.
- Communications personnel will provide updates to the public via Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/GeorgiaDOT>) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/GADeptofTrans>).
- Citizens can also access roadway conditions at the Department's winter weather web site: ([www.dot.ga.gov/winterweather](http://www.dot.ga.gov/winterweather)), as well as through the Georgia-Navigator 511 website ([www.511ga.org](http://www.511ga.org)).
- In addition to receiving regularly updated weather information from national sources, GDOT monitors local weather reports on television and radio.

## Equipment

- Road Weather Information System (RWIS) – roadway sensors in 15 new locations around the metro area, one in Macon and 11 in north Georgia to help more confidently predict weather conditions including the ice, temperature, precipitation and wind. Locations and the number of RWIS were determined by the GEMA taskforce.
- Additional cameras and Changeable Message Signs (CMS) have been added to the Navigator Intelligent Transportation System to assist in monitoring and deploying resources during a weather event.
- Single and/or double axle dump trucks with snowplows attached to the front to push the snow and ice from the roadways.
- Single and/or double axle dump trucks with hopper spreaders or tailgate spreaders attached to the rear to distribute the salt mixture and brine used for de-icing the roads.
- Single and/or double axle dump trucks with *both* salt/stone spreaders and snowplows attached.
- Multi lane tow plows to allow one dump truck to clear two lanes in one pass. The Department has 5 towplows to be dispatched around the state as needed to clear snow and ice from interstates and multi-lane state routes.

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- Tractor-type motor graders to move snow.
- Chainsaws to remove trees and branches from the roadway.
- Brine maker and tanks - Brine maker creates a liquid form of salt that can be stored for use as needed. New distribution tanks are added to the hopper spreaders that distribute the solid form of salt and stone. The new saddlebag tanks allow an operator to spread the liquid mixture and the solid mixture together or just spread the solid mixture on the roadway using one dump truck. All new spreaders have liquid saddlebag tanks for distribution. District offices also have new holding tanks that can store up to 5,000 gallons of brine.
- A Brine Pre-treatment Program has been added for metro Atlanta:
  - Brine will be used to pre-treat priority routes approximately 12-24 hours before a winter weather event and is intended to reduce the bonding of ice to the asphalt so that the ice is more easily removed from the pavement
  - Ten 5000-gallon tankers are available to apply brine treatment to the interstates
  - Automated brine production unit that includes 100,000 gallon storage unit will be in place in December 2014.

Brine tankers and transporters



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## Response Teams

Four types of teams are designated to respond to different incident types during a winter storm event:

- Brine distribution unit includes 10 brine distribution tankers that will dispense brine along pre-designated sections of Interstate 285 and all interstate routes inside I-285 up to 24 hours before the onset of a winter weather event. Brine tankers will be escorted by the Georgia State Patrol.
- Eighteen Interstate teams with 3-5 tandem dump trucks (trucks with snow plows and material spreaders attached) will treat and remove snow from roadway.
- Forty Special Response teams will respond to “hot spots” independent of the treatment areas where the Interstate teams will focus.
- Traffic Strike Teams consisting of Georgia State Patrol, Georgia DOT Highway Emergency Response Operators, Department of Natural Resources, Georgia Forestry Commission and Georgia Department of Defense will focus on clearing incidents on 5-10 mile segments of I-285; I-75 and I-85 inside the perimeter; and portions of I-20, GA 400 and SR 166.