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For Immediate Release:

Tuesday, January 19, 2016

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GEORGIA DOT IS PREPARED TO CLEAR THE HIGHWAYS FROM SNOW AND ICE IN NORTHWEST GEORGIA

CARTERSVILLE, Ga. - Winter weather preparations kicked into high gear this afternoon as crews in District Six in Northwest Georgia gassed up trucks equipped with snow plows and salt and stone spreaders, in case roads become covered with snow or ice. They are ready to clear the state roadways of ice and snow and keep Georgians moving. Starting at around 8:00 PM, a brine unit will pre-treat the interstates in Northwest Georgia beginning with I-75 from Whitfield County to the Tennessee State line. Brine is a mixed liquid of salt and water that is used as a preventative treatment, and is intended to limit the bonding of the ice to the pavement.

Weather forecasts predict that the first batch of the 2016 winter weather may hit North Georgia tonight through Wednesday morning with the mountains having the most snow accumulations. This potential winter weather episode is a reminder for the state that despite the relative warm weather of the last few weeks, Old Man Winter is here and may stay for some time. For snow and ice road clearing crews with the Georgia Department of Transportation in Northwest Georgia, that means the potential for long days and even longer nights keeping the roads clear and safe for the traveling public. These winter weather crews will work in two 12-hour shifts, with the first shift beginning at midnight.

In the 17 counties of Northwest Georgia, the state DOT has the following resources to deal with the current winter weather event:

- 255 employees on call
- 9,580 tons of salt
- 10,409 tons of gravel
- 66 snow removal equipment units
- 15,000 gallons of brine

When winter weather hits Northwest Georgia, keeping the highways safe for emergency vehicles becomes a top priority. Georgia DOT crews focus first on clearing interstates and heavily traveled state routes from snow and/or ice, and will specifically target areas vulnerable to freezing, like hills, ramps, bridges and interchanges.

Motorists are urged to:

- Slow down and stay behind the snowplows. The road behind the plow will be the safest place to drive. Allow at least ten car lengths between your vehicle and snowplows or hopper spreaders.
- Do not pass. The plows are wide, and sometimes a group of trucks will work in tandem to clear snow quickly, especially on major highways.
- Be particularly aware of black ice conditions on surfaces such as bridge decks and entrance and exit ramps late tonight and the early hours of tomorrow morning.
- Remember that technology helps, but only to a point. Four-wheel drive, anti-lock brakes and traction control are
 beneficial advancements in today's cars, trucks and SUVs, but they can't take the place of good driving habits and the
 need to reduce speed on snowy or icy roads.
- Call 511 or visit www.511ga.org to get current information on road conditions. Georgia 511 is a free phone service that provides real-time traffic and travel information statewide, such as traffic conditions, incidents, lane closures, and delays due to inclement weather. Callers also can transfer to operators to request assistance or report incidents 24 hours a day, seven days a week. More information is available at www.511ga.org

Motorists can access real-time, statewide, route-specific information on accidents, road work, traffic and weather conditions through Georgia 511 - a free phone service. By dialing 511, callers also can transfer to operators to 24 hours a day to report incidents or request assistance. The system can be used to access transit providers, major airports, rideshare organizations, tourism information and 511 systems in surrounding states. Additionally, 511 is available online. Georgia DOT partners with sponsors for assistance in funding 511, thereby preserving tax dollars and helping sustain critical services. For more information about 511, visit www.511ga.org. For more information on Georgia DOT, please visit www.dot.ga.gov or subscribe to our Press





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