

# SAFETY GUIDE

FOR WINTER TRAVEL



Texas Department of Transportation

# WE'RE READY

## Winter emergency road preparedness

Hazardous weather can unexpectedly change from freezing ice to snow and fog in some areas of the state. TxDOT works 24/7 to ensure our roads remain passable and safe year-round. Road crews throughout the state are especially prepared to improve road safety during severe winter weather conditions.

Roadways are prioritized for clearing by interstate, U.S. highway, state highway and farm-to-market roads, as well as bridges, overpasses, high traffic interchanges and high-traffic roadways. Local city and county entities are responsible for clearing local roadways. TxDOT works the most heavily traveled interstates, freeways and highways first. After these high-priority roadways are passable, we focus on the less traveled routes.

Particular attention is given to bridges, high-traffic interchanges and roadways. TxDOT uses snowplows, salt spreaders and liquid de-icing rigs to assist with de-icing/anti-icing of the roadways and bridges.

TxDOT stockpiles various types of de-icers and anti-icing agents for winter storms as well as sand or small aggregate. Because each winter storm is unique, TxDOT uses a combination of materials and equipment depending on the severity of the storm.

**If stranded, call 911 to alert emergency services.**

### TREATING THE ROADS

Each area of Texas treats roads based on weather conditions. The two most common materials used include:

- Liquid anti-icing solution to prevent roads from icing
- Granular de-icing materials to improve traction.

## USE CAUTION!

### Simple driving tips to practice on the roads

TxDOT's #1 priority is the safety of the traveling public, including using every resource available to keep the roads open and passable during winter storms. Motorists should always exercise caution and, if possible, allow extra time to reach destinations or delay travel until conditions improve.

- Remove snow and ice from your vehicle before you drive.
- Maintain your vehicle in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations.
- Ensure headlights and tail lights are functioning properly.
- Accelerate slowly, drive slowly, and observe traffic signs and alerts.
- Approach bridges, shaded spots and turns slowly.

# PLAN FOR THE ROAD

## Reduce your risks and avoid winter road hazards

You can reduce your risk by simply practicing a few road safety habits. Avoid getting caught by surprise, plan ahead and be aware of alerts and advisories. Good road safety tips include:

- Stay tuned to local news and weather alerts.
- Obtain information about road conditions online at [drivetexas.org](http://drivetexas.org) or by calling **1-800-452-9292**

# AUTO SAFETY CHECK

## Ensure your vehicle is maintained

Wiper blades

Heater/defroster

Ignition/battery

Anti-freeze level

Headlights  
and tail lights



Fuel

Brakes

Tires

# PREPARE A ROAD EMERGENCY KIT

- Booster cables
- Texas road map
- Chain/tow strap/shovel
- Abrasive materials (sand or cat litter)
- First-aid kit
- Flashlight
- Extra pair of socks and gloves
- Blanket
- Batteries
- Snacks and water
- Ice scraper
- Flares and matches

Texas Road Conditions Hotline: **1-800-452-9292**

If stranded, **call 911** to alert emergency services.



# Road Safety Alert

## TAKE EXTRA PRECAUTIONS

...while traveling through remote counties, primarily in North and West Texas during winter months.

Historically, North and West Texas experience the heaviest snowfalls, extreme white-outs, or icy road and bridge conditions. These areas are generally where you could encounter major winter storms. Be prepared if you plan to travel on roads leading toward El Paso or Amarillo. Rural areas of the state have very limited to no access to food, lodging, gas or emergency medical services.

**Stranded for any reason on a Texas roadway?  
Please call 911 to alert emergency services.**

## STAY INFORMED. BE WINTERSAFE.

The information contained in this safety guide is intended to raise your awareness of potential hazardous conditions and contains tips to improve your road safety preparedness.

Stay tuned to local news for road closures, changing conditions and advisories.

For more information visit:  
**[drivetexas.org](http://drivetexas.org)**



[www.TxDOT.gov](http://www.TxDOT.gov)



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