



## **Ohio Turnpike’s Roadway Safety Preparedness for Winter Begins with Snowplow Truck Inspections**

BEREA, Ohio (Oct. 27, 2023) – In preparation for winter roadway conditions, employees from the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission this week performed a 136-point inspection of all snowplow trucks and equipment at eight maintenance facilities across the 241-mile toll road.

“The importance of these inspections is to make sure the snowplow trucks are ready to go for the safety of our patrons who rely on the Ohio Turnpike for their travel needs,” said Jeff Landel, superintendent of the Ohio Turnpike’s Western Division, which includes the maintenance facilities in Pioneer (Williams County), Swanton (Fulton County), Elmore (Ottawa County), and Castalia (Erie County). “It’s all about the readiness of the fleet.”

Landel, a resident of Edgerton, Ohio, began his career with the Ohio Turnpike as a maintenance/roadway worker, which included snowplow duties, in 1996.

“It’s been a rewarding career,” added Landel, who climbed the employment ranks with several job promotions over more than two decades to become superintendent in 2021.

This year, more than 100 snowplow trucks at eight maintenance buildings will be available to maintain the Ohio Turnpike’s 1,395 lane miles, 31 toll plaza interchanges, and 14 service plazas across 13 counties in northern Ohio. Each facility maintains a 30-mile stretch of the turnpike.

“The maintenance checklist includes an inspection of all engine parts, plowing equipment, tires, lights, and other components as well as a test calibration of the salt and liquid de-icing systems and more,” said Matt McMullen, superintendent of the Ohio Turnpike’s Eastern Division, which includes the maintenance facilities in Amherst (Lorain County), Richfield (Summit County), Windham (Portage County), and Canfield (Mahoning County).

McMullen, who grew up in Brady Lake, Ohio, started his career with the Ohio Turnpike as a custodian at Hiram Maintenance Building in Windham in 1997.

Over the next 25 years, he ascended the ranks on a career pathway that included several promotions from a maintenance/roadway worker to assistant section clerk to assistant foreman at three maintenance buildings to foreman to assistant superintendent and to superintendent in March 2022.

“It has truly been a career,” said McMullen, who spent 14 years working as a snowplow truck operator. “The Ohio Turnpike is one of the places still around where you can spend your entire working career and advance if you want to. There are a lot of opportunities with competitive pay and benefits, and the work pace is steady year-round.”

Last year, Ohio Turnpike staff handled 30 winter storm events, a decline from the previous season. Roadway and maintenance crews worked more than 26,000 hours to keep the toll road and facilities clear of snow and ice.

“Motorists should take every precaution to avoid passing snowplow trucks and allow extra space for the drivers to clear the road,” said Ferzan Ahmed, executive director of the turnpike commission in Berea. “Don’t crowd the plow. The safest place to be is behind a snowplow truck.”

When required, the Ohio Turnpike’s maintenance/roadway crews will work 12-hour shifts, seven days a week to provide travelers with a safe and reliable roadway during the winter season, Ahmed added.

“The entire 241-mile Ohio Turnpike can be plowed once per hour with the current staffing and equipment levels,” Ahmed said. “During winter storms, motorists should consider traveling only when necessary.”

Last season, more than 232,000 gallons of de-icing liquid and 35,000 tons of salt were used to remove snow and ice from the toll road and bridges. (On average, about 286,000 gallons of liquid chemicals and 63,000 tons of salt are used per year.)

If your vehicle breaks down or you are involved in a crash, turn on the hazard lights, move the vehicle as far off the roadway as possible, remain in the vehicle, and dial #677 for assistance in Ohio.

## **Looking for a New Career Opportunity?**

The Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission is looking to fill several career opportunities at its maintenance facilities across the 241-mile toll road.

Positions are currently available for maintenance/roadway workers, electricians, plumbers, mechanics, body shop technician, and a landscaper as well as trainees for the two-year maintenance/roadway apprenticeship program.

For a complete list of career opportunities and locations, [click here](#).

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**Contact:**

Charles Cyrill  
Interim Director of Marketing and Communications  
Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission  
682 Prospect St.  
Berea, OH 44017  
m: 440.821.3399  
[charles.cyrill@ohioturnpike.org](mailto:charles.cyrill@ohioturnpike.org)