



News from the Ohio Turnpike

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For Immediate Release:

Ohio Turnpike Snow & Ice Fleet is ready for Winter Season 2021-2022

BEREA (Oct. 19-22, 2021) – Ohio Turnpike maintenance crews made their final preparations for the upcoming winter season this week with comprehensive winter equipment inspections.

The Turnpike-wide, 136-point inspection of all snowplows and equipment takes place annually just before the first signs of winter weather. This year, the inspection process was held beginning on Oct. 19 through Oct. 22 at eight Maintenance Buildings along the 241-mile mainline.

A sufficient number of snowplows will be available at any given moment to maintain the 1,395 lane miles, 31 interchanges, and 14 service plazas on the Ohio Turnpike. When snow and ice events continue around the clock, crews will work 12-hour shifts to clear the road. There are 15 salt storage facilities and the Turnpike begins stockpiling salt in the late summer. Crews use an average of 65,000 tons of salt each year and 293,000 gallons of liquid chemicals per year.

The top priority, especially during extremely heavy snowfall is clearing the right and center lanes on the Turnpike mainline. Then the crews focus attention on third lanes, interchanges, service plazas and shoulders.

Turnpike crews use multiple techniques and advanced equipment to battle winter snowstorms, including towplows. Towplows have the ability to clear and treat two lanes of traffic simultaneously while using only one truck. This is a benefit because it allows additional lane miles to receive attention in less time, saves fuel and creates fewer emissions.

Typically customers will see Turnpike trucks on the mainline performing tandem plowing, where two snowplows travel one behind the other to clear two lanes at the same time.

Another method sometimes performed is Echelon Plowing, which utilizes four or more snowplows closely staggered to clear all lanes of the Turnpike, including the shoulders, with one pass. This is typically required when a single heavy storm or multiple storms occur, which often causes excess snow to build up on the median wall.

These techniques on the Turnpike, along with other standard practices, make it one of the safest routes to travel this winter.

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The Ohio Turnpike is not subject to local Snow Emergencies and does not close during them.

It's also important for customers to do their part in making travel safe for everyone. Simple steps to take: make sure your vehicle is road-ready, plan for extra travel time when necessary and always allow extra distance between vehicles.

Motorists should slow down, avoid distractions and drive according to the conditions of the road. They should be especially cautious on ramps, bridges and overpasses.

Motorists should avoid passing snowplows and allow extra space for the plow drivers to clear the road. "Our experienced and dedicated crews will be working hard to make sure customers have a safe driving experience on the Ohio Turnpike," said Chris Matta, Deputy Chief Engineer and Director of Field Operations. "After all, the safest place to be on the road is *behind* a snowplow."

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