



## *News from the Ohio Turnpike*

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[www.ohioturnpike.org](http://www.ohioturnpike.org)

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

### **Ohio Turnpike Commission Issues Statement on Snowplow Incident in Erie County**

BEREA, Ohio (Jan. 24, 2022) – Concerning the snowplow incident that occurred on the Ohio Turnpike on Sunday, Jan. 23, Ferzan Ahmed, executive director of the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission, issued the following statement:

“During our snow and ice operations, a plow truck driver was travelling westbound plowing snow in the left lane and in the left shoulder with the wing plow deployed. Beginning near the 117 milepost, which is close to the State Route 250 interchange, the plow truck operator was throwing snow, ice and slush over the median divider wall onto oncoming traffic. This appears to have occurred over a couple miles, resulting in damage to approximately 40 cars and trucks, caused accidents, and unfortunately injuries.

“As with any incident that results in accident or injury, the employee was immediately removed from shift and sent for mandatory drug and alcohol testing. The employee is currently on administrative leave pending the outcome of these investigations when appropriate action will be taken.

“All snow and ice operations conducted on the Ohio Turnpike are performed by turnpike employees, utilizing commission equipment. In general, employees who plow snow are Maintenance Worker Class II Roadway employees. This classification of employees is responsible for the repair and maintenance of the turnpike and snow and ice removal in winter. Hiring of employees includes a thorough review of related skills and experience necessary for the position, such as interview, background checks (BMV, criminal and employment), pre-employment physical and drug/alcohol testing. Following hire, employees go through an extensive training including snow and ice removal.

“In addition to the extensive training, our snowplow operators are provided with some of the best equipment in the industry to perform their job duties. Our track record in snow and ice operations over the past 66 years speaks for itself. The Ohio Turnpike is one of the safest highways in the nation and is especially known for our ability to meet the demands of the most severe weather events. This was an isolated incident involving a single operator and is not representative of our employees or our operations.

“The Ohio State Patrol, Ohio Turnpike Maintenance, and disabled vehicle service companies, Interstate Towing and Madison Motor Service, assisted in removing the vehicles from the turnpike. We took the customers to the patrol post in Milan, Ohio, as well as a local restaurant and hotel.

“We are coordinating our efforts with the Ohio State Highway Patrol and are currently contacting each customer directly who was affected by yesterday's snowplow incident. Individuals wishing to file a property damage claim with the Ohio Turnpike should do so on our website: <https://www.ohioturnpike.org/travelers/property-damage-claim>

“Affected customers are encouraged to contact their individual insurance companies to address vehicle damage and immediate transportation needs. As stated previously, the Ohio Turnpike and Ohio State Highway Patrol are conducting investigations and appropriate action will be taken pending the outcome of these investigations.

“If you have any questions, contact the Ohio Turnpike Customer Service Center at (440) 971-2222.”

**For more information contact:**

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