

Dane County Exec. Parisi: Showcases new tow plow equipment ahead of snowfall

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New Equipment Will Help Clear Roads Quicker

Today, County Executive Joe Parisi joined Dane County Highway Commissioner Jerry Mandli and staff from the Dane County Highway Department to showcase the County's new tow plow equipment ahead of Thursday night and Friday morning's predicted snowfall. These tow plows allow one truck to clear two lanes of highway at the same time in a single pass. This is the first winter the tow plows have been used by the Department to help clear snow and apply material, like salt and brine, to the Interstate and the Beltline. The equipment will help keep Dane County's increasingly busy and expanding highways safe during major winter weather events.

"This new equipment will help the Highway Department keep pace with Dane County's growing infrastructure and clear our roads of ice and snow more efficiently during winter weather events," said Dane County Executive Joe Parisi. "Many thanks to the Dane County Highway Department staff who work around the clock to maintain public safety on our roads during the winter season."

The growth of Dane County's population has resulted in more multi-lane highways and adds to the complexity of keeping roads safe in ice and snow. Currently, there are approximately 1,090 county lane miles and 1,444 state lane miles Dane County snowplow drivers cover during major winter weather events. Tow plows allow the Department to be more efficient in how drivers cover the major thoroughfares and

apply materials to provide and maintain a good level of service with the expanding state roads. This equipment improves Dane County's ability to keep traffic safely moving on the Beltline and the Interstate.

County Executive Parisi included \$2 million in his 2020 budget to purchase four tow plows and heavy-duty quad-axle trucks, as well as \$1.4 million to buy four more tri-axle highway trucks to help clear the roads. Three of the tow plows swing to the right and one can swing to the left or right. Equipment on display at today's event included two tow plow units and two new compressed natural gas (CNG) triaxle highway trucks, along with a "No Zone/Don't Crowd the Plow" staging.

Ahead of Thursday night and Friday morning's predicted snowfall, here are some important tips Dane County snowplow drivers want the public to know:

- Give snowplow trucks plenty of room to operate. The truck's plow is wider than one traffic lane. The snowplow truck has the ability to distribute salt across three lanes of traffic. Give snowplow drivers room to work.
- Stay 300 feet behind snowplow trucks. Snowplow operators often have to stop, turn, and back up if they are clearing an intersection. If you are following too closely, the snowplow driver may not be able to see you.
- When you come upon a snowplow, reduce your speed. The traveling speed of a snowplow truck ranges from only 5 to 35MPH.
- During winter weather events, people need to slow down and give themselves more time to get to work. Bridges tend to get slippery. Don't change lanes on a bridge.
- When you are driving in winter conditions, don't get yourself in a position where you have to apply your brakes. If the road is slippery and you apply the brakes, you may lose control of your vehicle.
- Do not use your cruise control in slippery road conditions, it may cause you to lose control of your vehicle.