

Dept. of Transportation: Urges extreme caution during upcoming winter storm

Posted on Wednesday, Dec 21, 2022

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A winter storm system is expected to move through Wisconsin tonight into Friday, bringing snow, high winds, reduced visibility and frigid temperatures across the state. Road conditions will vary significantly depending on location, so the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is encouraging drivers to be weather aware, especially if traveling for the holiday weekend.

Travel may not be advised in some parts of the state on Friday (Dec. 23) due to potential blizzard conditions. Drivers should plan ahead and visit 511wi.gov to monitor winter road conditions and view live traffic camera videos along their route. Winter road conditions include good winter driving, slippery stretches, snow covered, ice covered, and travel not advised.

The National Weather Service forecasts strong winds and blowing snow Thursday night through Friday night across most of the state. Wind gusts are forecast to be up to 55 miles per hour and could create blizzard-like conditions, limiting visibility on the roads even when snow is not falling. Sustained winds can make driving difficult, especially for high profile vehicles like trucks, which are at risk of losing control or tipping over in windy conditions. Drivers should be aware when traveling near larger vehicles and keep a safe distance.

Conditions may become too challenging for tow companies to assist stranded or disabled vehicles, so it could take longer to get help. With subzero windchills expected, becoming stranded on the highway could turn dangerous for motorists.

Snowplow crews and emergency responders across Wisconsin are preparing for

potentially hazardous conditions on the roads throughout the duration of the storm.

Preparation before winter travel

- If you must travel, check [511wi.gov](https://www.511wi.gov) for road conditions or incidents along your route. [Download the 511 Wisconsin app](#) to monitor conditions on the go. Monitor [511 Wisconsin on Twitter](#) (@511WI) for the latest incidents and information.
- Clear snow and ice from vehicles before traveling.
- Fill the gas tank and windshield washer fluid.
- Have a fully charged phone and an [emergency kit in your vehicle](#).
- Alert others about your route and expected travel time.

Precautions while driving

- Snow means *slow*. Allow extra travel time, following distance, and reduce your speed during winter conditions.
- Be cautious on bridges, overpasses, and entrance and exit ramps.
- Don't be overconfident in four-wheel or all-wheel-drive vehicles. All vehicles require additional time and distance to stop in adverse conditions.
- Avoid using cruise control in winter conditions.
- Buckle up and put your phone down while driving. Every trip, every time.
- Leave room for maintenance vehicles and snowplows. Move over or slow down for stopped emergency vehicles.
- Stay at least 200 feet behind a working snowplow. Make sure that you can see the plow's mirrors to ensure the driver can see you.
- In case of a crash or slide off, stay in the vehicle, turn on the hazards, call 911 and move vehicle(s) out of traffic if possible.

For Motor Carriers

Trucking companies and their drivers are strongly encouraged to review their schedules and routes, and plan accordingly. Commercial motor vehicle drivers should check [511wi.gov](https://www.511wi.gov) before departure and throughout their trips for current travel impacts and advisories. Oversize/Overweight vehicle drivers are reminded their permits restrict operations during inclement weather.