

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
PennDOT Urges Drivers to Use Caution during Winter Weather

Allentown, PA (February 1, 2017)

Winter weather and the potential for heavy snow squalls are in the forecast for areas of east central Pennsylvania today. Sudden and heavy snow squalls are one of the biggest challenges that motorists, including PennDOT plow truck drivers, face during the winter; and motorists need to be alert for sudden squalls that can quickly cause roads to become snow covered.

Heavy squalls can also cause whiteout conditions that can greatly restrict or virtually eliminate a driver's visibility. If motorists do encounter snow squalls while traveling, PennDOT offers this advice:

- Slow down gradually and drive at a speed that suits the conditions.
- Turn on your headlights.
- Stay in your lane.
- Increase your following distance.
- Stay alert, keep looking as far ahead as possible and be patient.
- Reduce in-car distractions since your full attention is required.
- Use defroster and wipers.
- Keep windows and mirrors free of snow and ice.
- During whiteouts, come to a complete stop only when you can safely get as far off the road as possible or when there is a safe area to do so.
- Do not stop in the flow of traffic since this could create a chain-reaction collision.
- Do not pass a vehicle moving slowly or speed up to get away from a vehicle that is following too closely.
- Always buckle up and never drink and drive.

Meanwhile, PennDOT is prepared, with plow trucks and other equipment ready. Salt, anti-skid and other materials are in good supply. Crews will work around the clock if necessary to keep the roads safe and passable.

Motorists are reminded that roadways will not be free of snow while precipitation is falling. With freezing temperatures, roads that look wet may actually be icy, and extra caution is needed when approaching bridges and highway ramps where ice can form without warning. Motorists should leave plenty of space – six car lengths --- when following a truck that is plowing or spreading winter materials.

While PennDOT recommends not traveling during winter storms, motorists can check conditions on more than 40,000 roadway miles, including color-coded winter conditions on 2,900 miles, by visiting www.511PA.com. 511PA, which is free and available 24 hours a day, provides traffic delay warnings, weather forecasts, traffic speed information and access to more than 770 traffic cameras.

511PA is also available through a smartphone application for iPhone and Android devices, by calling 5-1-1, or by following regional Twitter alerts accessible on the 511PA website.

PennDOT reminds motorists to pack an emergency kit for their vehicles. A basic kit should include non-perishable food, water, blanket, small shovel and warm clothes. When preparing an emergency kit, motorists should take into account special needs of passengers such as baby food, pet supplies or medications and pack accordingly.

PennDOT also reminds citizens that downloadable materials, including home and car emergency kit checklists and emergency plan templates, are available at

www.ReadyPA.org or by calling 1-888-9-READYPA. Citizens can find information about getting involved in local emergency response efforts and other volunteer opportunities through the Web site or the toll-free line.

For more information on winter driving and PennDOT operations, visit www.penndot.gov/winter. Follow regional PennDOT information on Twitter at www.twitter.com/511PAAllentown.

To view a complete list of District 5 News Releases: Click <http://www.penndot.gov/RegionalOffices/district-5/Pages/allnews.aspx>

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