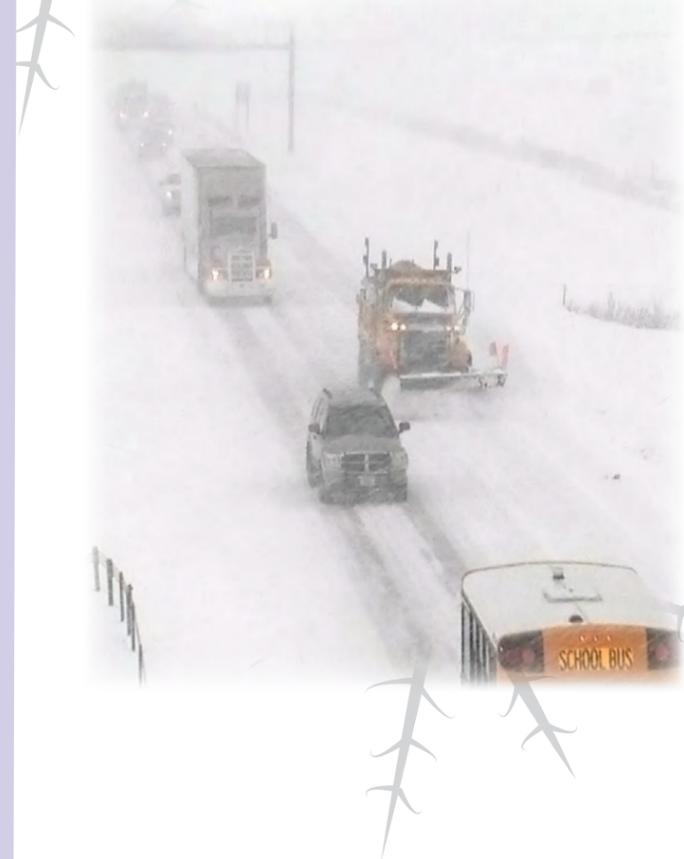


SHOULD I TRAVEL?

WEATHER WARNINGS

WINTER DRIVING IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Provided as a public service by the
SD Department of Transportation



REVISED DECEMBER 2017

- * Check with local media for current and forecasted weather and road reports.

- * Call **511** from any South Dakota mobile phone or landline. The free service allows you to dial the highway number to get condition reports 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Out of state phones dial toll-free **866-MYSD 511 (866-697-3511)**.

- * Visit www.SafeTravelUSA.com for road conditions, weather reports and timely camera views of several major roadways. And while you're there, sign up for ClearPath511 to get text alerts or emails to your mobile device.

- * Download the **#SDDOT511** app for Android and iOS to have the latest information at your fingertips.

- * While traveling, look for **electronic message signs** along the Interstate. They will have information regarding any road closures or dangerous road conditions.

- * Motorists should also consider that motels and emergency shelters can fill up quickly if a road has to be closed. It is safer and more comfortable to stay at home or stop before you reach the storm while you wait for it to pass.



TAKE WINTER STORMS SERIOUSLY

ICE STORMS

Ice storms are less common than snow storms in South Dakota, but they are equally as *dangerous*.

- * Winter storms in South Dakota can be deadly. The key to survival is to **be prepared**.

- * Carry a **charged cell phone**, but don't rely on it to get you out of a bad situation.

- * Carry a **winter travel survival kit**.

- * **Let someone know** when you depart, your route, and your expected arrival time.

- * **Dress** according to the weather conditions.

- * **Fill your fuel tank** before you leave.

- * **Avoid driving in freezing rain.**

- * Do not rely on your windshield washer fluid or defroster. Failure of either, or both, of these systems will leave you blind.

- * If freezing rain starts while you are on the road, **get off the road and get to a safe place** to wait out the storm.

- * Remember to **contact someone** to let them know you have stopped and are safe.



IF YOU ARE STRANDED IN YOUR VEHICLE DURING A WINTER STORM...

- * Stay with your vehicle
- * Use your mobile phone to call 911.
- * Check your supplies to see what you have available and arrange them in order for their use.
- * Run the engine sparingly.
- * Keep the exhaust pipe clear of snow.

- * If the cold is extreme, it may be necessary to keep the engine running continuously. It may not restart if shut off.
- * Keep your feet off the floor if the heater is not on.
- * Turn on the dome light at night while the engine is running. Turn it off when you turn off the engine so you don't run down the car's battery.
- * Put on warm clothing right away, before you start to get cold. Loosen tight clothing so body heat can circulate. Remove metal jewelry, as it can chill you.

- * Never go to sleep with the engine running.
- * Watch for signs of frostbite or hypothermia.
- * Eat a snack of high calorie food just before sleeping to stimulate your metabolism (heat production).
- * Tie a colorful banner on the car antenna. If you need to leave the car for any distance during the storm, tie a nylon rope to the car and yourself so you will be able to find your way back to the car.

WINTER DRIVING IN SOUTH DAKOTA

WHEN DO THE PLOWS GO OUT?

During a storm, and when conditions are safe enough for plows to be out, plows generally operate from **5 a.m. to 7 p.m.**

Winter maintenance outside of these hours may be performed when necessary and practical. Routine extended hour winter maintenance is also performed on some of the more highly traveled routes around the metropolitan areas of Sioux Falls and Rapid City.

Generally, snow plows make their rounds *as often as possible*, provided the conditions are safe enough for crews to be out. On an interstate or other major route, this can be as often as every couple of hours.

REMEMBER- Snowplows often run in conditions that are too severe for the average motorist. A snowplow on the road is not a sign that it is safe to travel.



DRIVING ON SNOWY OR ICY ROADS

- * Slow down. *Drive the conditions*, not the speed limit.
- * *Avoid doing anything suddenly*, such as lane changing or braking.
- * Begin slowing *well in advance* of your normal slowing or stopping distance.
- * Do NOT use cruise control.
- * Keep a good distance between you and the car in front of you.
- * *Be careful* approaching bridges or overpasses, they may have snow or ice on them even if the rest of the roadway is dry.

DYNAMIC MESSAGE SIGNS

Electronic message signs are located at 30 strategic locations along the Interstate System. The signs are used to display messages about road closures, driving conditions, and other emergency information.

**DON'T CROWD
THE PLOW**

DON'T CROWD THE PLOW

- * Snowplows provide an important public service providing the traveling public with the best possible winter driving conditions by plowing and deicing roads. *Please be patient and give the plows plenty of room if you meet one on the road.*
- * Begin slowing down as soon as you see a snowplow. The most common accidents are those where a motorist rear ends a snowplow.
- * Snowplows operate at speeds less than 35 mph
- * Leave space between your vehicle and the snowplow. Operators cannot see directly behind their large snowplows.
- * Know where the plow is on multi-lane highways.
- * Be careful when passing snowplows or other cars on the road. Make sure the oncoming roadway is clear of vehicles and drifts.
- * Stuck or abandoned vehicles are only pulled out by snowplows in conditions where lives may be threatened.
- * Priority routes for snow removal are established in order to serve the greatest number of motorists.

ROAD CLOSURES

South Dakota Law 31-4-14.2 authorizes the Department of Transportation or the Highway Patrol to close or restrict traffic on segments of state highways or interstate. Road closures occur predominantly on the interstate and are usually accompanied by travel advisories for other affected state highways.

Crews may use such traffic control devices as road closure gates, barricades, or place closure signs on the shoulder of the road. NEVER drive around a barricade, ignore a closure sign, or an advisory announced through the media. Doing so is a Class 2 misdemeanor punishable by up to a \$1,000 fine and 30 days in jail.

Should you drive around a barricade or travel on a road that has been announced as "closed" you could also be responsible for a civil penalty of up to \$1,000 and the actual cost of any expenses related to rescuing you, any passengers, or the vehicle operated by you, up to \$10,000.



WHEN DO ROADS CLOSE?

- * Road closures or restrictions are done with the greatest concern for the safety of the traveling public and emergency personnel.
- * Road closures occur predominantly on the interstate. State highways receive a travel advisory in lieu of a closure because they lack controlled points of access.
- * There are times when the Interstate may be closed but adjacent state highways are under a travel advisory. If the Interstate is closed, assume that all other roadways in the area are experiencing similar conditions.
- * Road conditions are not always good for travel even though a road is not closed. Pay attention to both travel and weather advisories.
- * Announcements will be made through the news media, posted to www.SafeTravelUSA.com, and as a message when dialing into the **511** system.

WHEN DO ROADS OPEN?

- * The Department of Transportation and the Highway patrol coordinate the opening of closed roads when conditions allow safe passage.
- * Announcements will be made with a media release, posted on www.SafeTravelUSA.com, and by dialing **511**.

TRAVEL ADVISORIES

NO TRAVEL ADVISED

This means that road and weather conditions are such that travel conditions are extremely difficult and hazardous. Motorists should not travel except for emergency situations.

ROAD IMPASSABLE

This means that road or weather conditions are such that widespread heavy snow or drifting has occurred such that travel is not possible.

ROAD CLOSED

A road closure means road or weather conditions are such that widespread ice, heavy snow, drifting and/or extremely poor visibility has created hazardous and life-threatening travel conditions and that travel is prohibited.

NOTIFICATION

Via www.SafeTravelUSA.com, radio and television announcements, media releases, message signs, and calling **511**.