

WINTER WEATHER MAINTENANCE AND SNOWPLOW INFORMATION



UDOT strives to provide the public with safe and clear winter roads. There are a variety of factors that may impact the condition of a road, including:

- Rate of snowfall
- Type of snowfall
- Anti-icing strategies
- Weather forecasts
- Winter storm maintenance standards

Actual plow routes and equipment assignments are determined by UDOT's District Engineers using the winter storm maintenance standards. Maintenance stations will provide normal services as soon as available resources permit during unusual or extreme winter conditions.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How does UDOT approach winter weather maintenance?

A: Each maintenance station operates under a Snow Plan devised under the direction of the District Engineer. The Snow Plan is designed to keep at least one travel lane in each direction open during a storm where snow accumulates on the road at the rate of one inch per hour or less. Resources/plows can be moved from lower priority routes to higher priority routes when the rate of precipitation exceeds that design rate.

Q: Where is UDOT responsible for plowing?

A: The removal of snow by State forces, except in emergencies, is confined to the limits of the highway right-of-way. The removal of the normal snowfall on private road approaches and driveways, both on and off the highway right-of-way, is the responsibility of the property owner. UDOT is not responsible for snow removal on sidewalks, overhead crosswalk structures, driveways, parking lots or roads not on the State System.

Q: Why is it that I never seem to see a snowplow during a winter storm?

A: UDOT has a fleet of approximately 500 plow trucks and is responsible for snow removal for approximately 24,300 lane-miles of roadway. The average time to complete a snow route varies based on the length of the route, but can be anywhere from 1-4 hours. Please also factor in time for a plow to re-load materials. Snowplows sometimes get stuck in the same traffic that motorists are in, reducing their ability to clear the roads.

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Q: How are UDOT resources allocated during heavy storm events?

A: During heavy storm events, UDOT uses the following hierarchy (listed in order with most important first):

1. Maintaining at least one open lane in each direction on Priority 1 routes
2. Maintaining at least one open lane in each direction on Priority 2 routes
3. Opening a second lane in each direction on Priority 1 routes
4. Maintaining one open lane in each direction on Priority 3 routes
5. Opening remaining lanes on Priority 1 routes
6. Opening remaining lanes on Priority 2 routes
7. Opening remaining lanes on Priority 3 routes
8. Achieve intermittent bare pavement on Priority 1 routes
9. Achieve intermittent bare pavement on Priority 2 routes
10. Achieve intermittent bare pavement on Priority 3 routes
11. Maintain one open lane in each direction on Priority 4 routes

Q: What are UDOT's Priority routes?

A: Priority 1 routes: Routes classified as principal arterial including interstate highways and primary routes to hospitals.

Priority 2 routes: Routes classified as minor arterial (urban or rural), school bus routes, and state routes to for-profit winter recreation areas determined eligible for snow removal services.

Priority 3 routes: Routes classified as urban collector and rural major collector.

Priority 4 routes: Routes classified as rural minor collector, urban local, or rural local; parking lots; turnouts; shoulders and gore areas on Priority 1, 2, and 3 routes; and access roads to State Parks that are primarily for summer use. Priority 4 routes may be closed for extended periods of time until resources become available.

Priority 5 routes: Seasonal Roads that close in the fall when snow depth requires closure and will not be reopened until spring weather conditions permit. Appropriate signing, closed gates, and public notification will be accomplished.

