



"Preserving Our Past, Enhancing Our Future"

Winter Storm Response

How the Commission prepares and responds

The unpredictable nature of winter weather – snow, ice, freezing rain -- can present significant challenges for motorists and pedestrians.

To provide bridge patrons with the best travel conditions possible during the winter months, the Commission's maintenance crews begin making preparations during the fall. This includes ordering road salt and liquid ice-melting chemicals (magnesium chloride), repairing snow-removal equipment, checking plows, and making other contingencies.

Crews can be deployed in a variety of ways. In cases of a well-predicted weather event, crews can be placed on standby at their respective facilities. In other cases, they can be called in at the first sign of deteriorating road conditions. Their primary objective is to ensure safe travel either by spreading of melting materials – road salt or magnesium chloride – or by plowing.

A response to a major storm is considered complete when pavements are clear of snow and ice to accommodate cars and trucks. The priority is vehicular travel lanes, but work also can extend to shoulders, toll-collection facilities, agency parking lots, entry and exit ramps, and highway median crossover lanes.

Commission Maintenance Forces

- Consists of 75 full-time employees assigned to 7 maintenance facilities
- These crews operate a fleet of trucks outfitted with snow plows, salt spreading machines, and/or ice-melting chemical spreaders
- They also operate snow throwers at bridges that have pedestrian walkways and sidewalks
- Overall, winter-storm response personnel are responsible for 20 bridge crossings and 17 miles of roadways

What motorists can do

While Commission maintenance personnel strive to keep the agency's bridges and roadways open to traffic during even the harshest of weather conditions, instances can arise when travel surfaces cannot be sufficiently cleared of snow and/or ice.

In such situations, the Commission requests motorists for their help by doing the following:

- Reducing speed
- Allowing greater distances between their vehicles and others travelling on a bridge or roadway
- Remembering that bridges always freeze before roadways