



"Preserving Our Past, Enhancing Our Future"

Plows & Sanders Command Patience, Respect

Exercise caution near snow removal equipment

It's seldom a fair match when an impatient driver's car collides with a snow plow. More often than not, the car will sustain the brunt of damage.

This is just one of the many reasons why the Commission urges motorists to slow down and give a wide berth when coming upon an agency vehicle in the active process of plowing or salting a bridge or roadway.

The Commission understands that it can be an aggravating experience for motorists to slow down and follow a plow truck or a line of snow plows. But the fact of the matter is that the safest place to be when driving in a snowstorm is behind a plow.

Yes, driving behind a plow will add extra time to a trip. But the alternative – racing ahead of a plow or salt truck – can be much worse. Often, people have trouble seeing the roadway. Or they spin out and go off the road. Or they get into an accident. Or they collide with the plow. Motorists not only increase the risk of damaging their vehicles, they also increase the possibility of getting injured when they pass a truck that is plowing or salting a roadway.

The road surface behind a plow is often in much better shape than the road ahead. If conditions are such that plowing is necessary, it behooves motorists to exercise care and caution.

What motorists should do

- Give space – Stay at least three car lengths behind plows and sanders.
- Respect the plow – Plows often extend several feet in front of a truck and they often stick out beyond the side of the truck.
- Exercise patience – If you find yourself behind a plow, stay behind it. Plows can throw cast off heavy streams of snow that cut visibility to zero.
- Share the road – A snowplow driver's vision is restricted and his/her attention should be on the roadway that is being plowed. A motorist may see a plow truck, but that doesn't mean the plow truck operator can see every motorist.
- Don't brake suddenly in front of a plow truck – Unnecessary sudden movements in front of a snowplow can be dangerous. Plows cannot stop as quickly as an automobile.
- Be aware of snow discharge – If it is ever necessary to pass a plow, check the direction of snow discharge from the plow to avoid the heavy amounts of snow being cast from the equipment. The snow being plowed or thrown off the road also can contain rocks and other debris that can damage vehicles.
- Remember – Bridges always freeze before roadways.