



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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From the NYSDOT - Long Island Motorists Advised To Use Caution On Roadways

JOHN J. FLANAGAN March 7, 2013

The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) is advising motorists that forecasts call for rain, snow, wintry precipitation and wind gusts up to 50 MPH which could create hazardous driving conditions particularly later this evening. Motorists are advised to drive with extreme caution throughout the storm. Presently, snowfall is predicted during the overnight hours with rain and wind during the day.

NYSDOT Long Island snow and ice crews are busy prepping 229 plow trucks and heavy duty loaders including 12 large snow plows that arrived from upstate New York this morning, to help clear state roadways throughout the stormy weather. More than 400 NYSDOT staff members, including 58 from upstate are being dedicated to snow, ice and storm operations through Friday afternoon March 8th, on a 24/7 basis. Snow plow crews will rest and be rotated in accordance with operational safety requirements. NYSDOT has representatives in both the Nassau and Suffolk County Emergency Operations Centers.

For real-time travel information, motorists should access NYSDOT's free 511NY traffic and travel information system by calling 511 or visiting www.511NY.org. The website features a winter travel advisory system, with real-time travel reports and a color-coded map indicating

which state roads are snow covered, ice covered, wet, dry, or closed to help drivers determine if travel is advisable. The system provides real-time snow and ice conditions for interstates and other heavily traveled roads, as reported by snowplow operators. When using 511NY, drivers must be aware that talking on a cell phone and texting while driving are illegal and that distracted driving is particularly hazardous during snow and ice conditions. Users should consult 511NY before traveling, or have a passenger access the system for information.

Some of the most important tips for safe winter driving include:

- Only drive if absolutely necessary.
- Never follow a snowplow too closely or attempt to pass one. Remember that the highway ahead of the plow is usually snow-covered
- Adjust speed for road conditions and maintain a safe distance from other vehicles
- Schedule extra time for winter travel and be patient during ice and snow removal operations
- Assume that bridge surfaces are slippery, as they freeze more quickly than road surfaces
- Watch for black ice, which can be difficult to see but makes conditions slippery when pavement temperatures are below freezing
- Have a cell phone handy, if possible, but do not text while driving; distracted driving is illegal and becomes even more dangerous during storm events
- Never venture from your vehicle if snowbound
- Equip your car with emergency supplies including sand, shovel, flares, booster cables, rope, ice scraper, portable radio, flashlight, blankets and extra warm clothes
- Inform a responsible person of your destination, intended route, and estimated time of arrival

- Keep calm and do not panic in case of a vehicle breakdown, accident, or if you become snowbound