



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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SDOT's New Winter Weather Map is Here and Snow Preparations Have Begun

SEATTLE – Winter is here and we're already getting near-freezing temperatures along with rainy weather and shorter days. SDOT crews have been preparing for winter since summer. We've developed a snow and ice response plan that is appropriate for Seattle's weather to keep major streets open and passable to the greatest extent possible. Our city has unique challenges. SDOT has procured salt reserves, new equipment and completed equipment safety and snow route training in preparation for lowland snow in the city.

SDOT is monitoring roadways and elevated surface temperatures throughout the city using these methods:

- Our staff follows weather reports 24 hours a day, all year long, with a direct line to the National Weather Service and live Doppler radar feeds.
- We use a forecasting tool developed with the University of Washington called SNOWWATCH to learn how a storm will most likely affect different neighborhoods. This information helps determine where the crews will be needed first.
- Our computerized sensors on city bridges, and ground surface sensors, provide timely and accurate air and roadway surface temperatures.
- We use [real-time, live-streaming cameras](#) to see actual conditions on key streets.

Over the past 48 hours, SDOT crews have treated arterial locations and elevated surfaces in preparation for possible freezing temperatures expected into the weekend and are prepared to deploy per conditions. During a snow event, a Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) system tracks the locations of SDOT trucks and the interactive [Winter Weather Response Map](#) shows where the trucks are at the current time and which streets the trucks have already serviced.

Our new [Winter Weather Brochure and Snow Route Map is available in 10 languages](#) and includes the [Gold and Emerald snow routes in the city](#).

(MORE)

- Gold routes – all lanes clear within 12 hours of lull in storm
- Emerald routes – one lane in each direction clear within 12 hours of lull in storm

SDOT Maintenance Operations crews are ready with snow response resources:

- Heavy trucks with plow and spreader
- Small trucks with plow and spreader
- Small trucks, plow only
- Liquid deicer trucks
- Motor patrol graders (with plow)
- Front-end loaders (with plow capability)
- Backhoes (with Plow capability)
- 3,500 tons of road salt
- 46,500 gallons of magnesium chloride (salt brine de-icer)

What to Expect when it Snows:

Know the routes on the [Winter Weather snow and ice route map!](#) We're committed to clearing snow from identified routes throughout the city within 12 hours of a significant lull in the storm. The map can help you know what to expect.

Drivers have some special responsibilities. If driving is unavoidable, drivers are responsible for outfitting their cars for winter weather, including chains or other traction devices. Businesses and residents are responsible for shoveling and de-icing the sidewalks next to their property.

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