

Winter Storm Advisory for Massachusetts on Tuesday

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is advising the public that weather forecasters are expecting a winter storm to impact travel across the Commonwealth throughout Tuesday, February 12. Snow is expected to begin falling during the Tuesday morning hours in Western Massachusetts and the storm will move eastward during the day, with snowfall rates at some times of one inch per hour, and with snow changing over to sleet in most regions. Members of the public are advised to minimize travel, use public transportation if possible, consider working from home if that is an option, or consider leaving work early on Tuesday. Driving conditions will become hazardous in Western Massachusetts around 10 a.m., Central Massachusetts around 1 p.m., and in the Boston area and Eastern Massachusetts around 3 p.m.

“We are asking people throughout the Commonwealth to make smart, safe decisions on Tuesday such as taking advantage of public transportation, working from home if possible and leaving early for their afternoon commute,” said Transportation Secretary and CEO Stephanie Pollack. “Everyone should check a weather forecast and travel conditions before heading out to avoid hazardous driving conditions, as there will be varying types of precipitation in all regions of Massachusetts, including snow, sleet, and freezing rain throughout the daytime and evening hours. The MBTA will be running subway lines in the Boston area at increased capacity starting at noon and all motorists should consider leaving early for their commute home and allowing plenty of extra time to travel.”

“MassDOT is currently conducting preparation activities for the deployment of snow and ice crews in advance of Tuesday’s

winter weather,” said Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver. “Forecasters are predicting snow, sleet, and freezing rain in the state which will make travel challenging, so we are asking everyone to have a plan which takes the weather into account. People who are driving should consult a forecast before heading out, give plenty of space to plows and snow and ice equipment, and consider taking public transportation when possible.”

Due to the forecast for the Boston regional area, the MBTA will have increased capacity on subway lines as of noon on February 12, in the event people decide to leave early from work on Tuesday. The MBTA is encouraging its customers to get service information by signing up for T-Alerts, following @MBTA and @MBTA_CR on Twitter, checking mbta.com/winter, and using the Transit app or the MBTA commuter rail app. New this season, the MBTA also launched a guide to winter, a customer-focused site that provides helpful service information.

While the MBTA is not planning any schedule changes for The RIDE, customers should be aware that snowy conditions may impact driving conditions, which could result in delays for pick-up and drop-off times. In addition, snow accumulation may affect drivers’ ability to gain safe access to locations not plowed or shoveled.

MBTA ferries are expected to operate regularly scheduled service on Tuesday and Wednesday. However, given the timing of the storm, customers should be cautious on pedestrian walkways and in parking facilities that may not have been fully cleared of snow and ice.

MassDOT’s snow and ice operations will be deployed throughout the Commonwealth as conditions necessitate. Crews are currently conducting preparation activities in advance of the winter weather and will be pretreating roadways with brine and Magnesium Chloride. MassDOT is also currently planning deployments of snowplows and spreaders and maintenance

equipment. In the worst storms, MassDOT's Highway Division is able to utilize up to 700 personnel to perform snow and ice removal operations on more than 15,000 lane miles of roadway throughout the Commonwealth. This winter, MassDOT will have approximately 3,900 pieces of state and vendor equipment available throughout the duration of winter storms using over 150 depots and storage locations. This includes over 1,400 plow and spreader combos, 2,100 plows, and 460 front-end loaders.

The RMV is currently rescheduling Tuesday afternoon road tests scheduled from 1 p.m., through the close of business. Morning tests are currently scheduled to take place and normal operations are expected with all other services and business.

Since the winter of 2015, the MBTA has upgraded track and signal infrastructure, invested in snow-fighting equipment, and stocked up on replacement parts for vehicles, making more than \$101 million in investments in winter resiliency. Last winter, the Boston area saw seventy inches of snow that included a challenging Nor'easter in January 2018 and four Nor'easters in March 2018 (three of which took place within less than two weeks) with the MBTA's Storm Desk activated six times. There were no shutdowns or closures in MBTA service with snow-fighting equipment pre-deployed and staffing levels of the Storm Desk increased as needed.

For the most up-to-date information on transportation impacts, please follow on Twitter @MBTA, @MBTA_CR, @MassDOT, and @MassRMV.

If drivers must go out on the roadways, they are advised to always wear seatbelts, minimize distractions, turn off or put away cell-phones and devote full attention to what is ahead on the road.

For updates on road and traffic conditions in Massachusetts, drivers can:

Dial 511 before heading out onto the roadways and select a route to hear real-time conditions.

Visit www.mass511.com, a website which provides real-time traffic and incident advisory information, access to traffic cameras, and allows users to subscribe to text and email alerts for traffic conditions.

Download MassDOT's GoTime mobile app and view real-time traffic conditions before setting out on the road.

Other important winter driving tips include:

- Clear snow and ice from all windows and lights, even the hood and roof, before driving, (start with the tailpipe).
- Leave plenty of room for stopping.
- Remember that the posted speed limits are for dry pavement.
- Use brakes carefully. Brake early. Brake correctly. It takes more time and distance to stop in adverse conditions.
- Bridge decks freeze first. Due to the difference in the exposure to air, the surface condition can be worse on a bridge than on the approach road.
- Exit ramps are an even greater challenge during the winter since they may have received less anti-icing material than the main line.
- Leave room for maintenance vehicles and plows – stay back at least 200 feet and don't pass on the right.
- Seat belts should be worn at all times – it's the law.
- Most importantly please remember to slow down.

Please review more information on safe winter driving.