



State of Missouri Team:

The winter season is a peak time of year for the team at MoDOT. Like other state agencies, MoDOT is a provider of essential services. Keeping Missouri roads clear of winter weather is one of the top things on our list. Preparing for winter operations during the COVID-19 pandemic created extra challenges for us.

Our winter preparations begin in the heat of summer. We order our salt supplies and do an extra push to hire new maintenance workers. This year we relied on only online, virtual interviews. We modified the onboarding of new employees for a socially distanced format. Throughout the fall, we had new employees continue to join our ranks. Since late summer, MoDOT has hired and trained 233 new maintenance workers and 209 emergency snowplow operators.

A key component to training is sharing time driving a truck with a trainer by your side. We used sentinel testing to test our seasoned MoDOT trainers and our new employees. The testing assured us that during the training week, both employees were safe to share the truck. We have given **more than 800 tests** to employees for winter operations training. These tests resulted in **only 23 positive results**. We accomplished the training of new employees without spreading the virus.

MoDOT needs 3,400 employees and has 1,500 trucks ready to fight winter weather. With the challenges of hiring during COVID, we are under our goal by 300 employees. But our team at MoDOT is ready. In an average winter, MoDOT employees plow more than 5 million miles. That is enough to go to the moon and back 13 times! So far this winter, we have only had a few minor storms and not much accumulation. But there are still two months left to go before we are in the clear of a potential snow or ice storm.

A key to our success with winter operations is our work with other state agencies. We are thankful for our partnerships with the Missouri State Highway Patrol, State Emergency Management Agency and the Missouri National Guard. This team serves the citizens well.

You can do your part to help stay safe during winter weather. Before your trip, check out road conditions before you go. [MoDOT's Traveler Information Map](#) offers current views of

road conditions. It is available as an app for iPhones and Android phones. Call our toll-free number for current road condition information at **888-ASK-MODOT (888-275-6636)**. You can call anytime 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Check your vehicle for fresh antifreeze and a good battery for cold weather.

If the weather is bad, postpone your travel if possible until roads are cleared. If you must travel, slow down and adjust your speed to the conditions. Give our MoDOT snowplows plenty of room, and don't pass them. Always wear your seat belt. If you slide off the road or have an incident, please stay in your vehicle with your seat belt on. Other vehicles on the road may not be able to stop and could slide into you. You are safest inside your vehicle.

Missouri state employees are among the most dedicated, hard-working people I know. I am proud of the MoDOT team's efforts to hire and train a new group of employees for winter operations. I know they are ready for whatever Mother Nature throws our way this winter.

I am encouraged every day that we will get through this pandemic. We will come out even stronger in state government because of you. We have amazing teams working together to serve the citizens of this great state.

Thank you for all you do and please stay safe and healthy.

Patrick K. McKenna, Director

Missouri Department of Transportation