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## Seattle's snowplow routes are changed this year

SEATTLE – The city's snowplow routes near your home and along your commute route may have changed this year, most likely for the better. To find out, see the map on Seattle Department of Transportation's Winter Weather website, <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/winterweather.htm>. The map is also in a brochure available at the city's public libraries, community centers, neighborhood service centers, and sent home in December with children in Seattle's public elementary schools.

SDOT applies salt brine or granular salt to fight against ice on bridges and main streets. When one or more inches of snow have accumulated, SDOT crews clear the streets that are on snowplow routes. SDOT has increased the miles of routes this year to accommodate the changes that Metro Transit has made to the routes that buses use when it snows. This year SDOT has added four more trucks, with plows and spreaders, to its fleet so that the crews will be able to serve the increased miles of snowplow routes.

SDOT's crews plan to plow and treat all of the city's snow routes with salt within 12 hours of a significant lull in the storm. The routes are on major streets throughout the city. There are two levels of snowplow service, depending on the street. The objective for streets in the "gold" category is to leave all of the travel lanes bare and wet. For streets in the "emerald" category, the objective is to have one lane in each direction that is bare and wet.

When there is a significant snowfall, you can get an idea of the current condition of the streets near you by looking at the Winter Weather Response Map at

<http://www.seattle.gov/sdot/winterweathermap/>. The map will show where the snowplows are

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currently working and which streets have been plowed and treated during the past 12 hours. This page also has links to views from traffic cameras that show the current condition of many streets. In addition, on SDOT's Traveler's Information page at <http://seattle.gov/travelers/> there are links to cameras with real live streaming video of more than 30 streets.

If you must travel when it snows, the best choice is to take the bus, so be sure you know the snow route for your bus route. SDOT will make a special effort to keep streets drivable for buses. If you must drive, be sure your car is fully equipped for severe conditions. Have all-weather tires and carry tire chains. Keep a small shovel in your car and a small amount of traction material such as sand in case you get stuck. Have food and water and a blanket in your car in case you are delayed.

For pedestrian safety, residents and businesses are asked to clear the sidewalks in front of their property.

During a snow storm you may follow SDOT on Facebook or Twitter, read the SDOT Blog or read traffic advisories on the On the Move Blog. Links to these sites are on SDOT's home page, <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/> If you have questions about snow and ice response, please call SDOT at (206) 684-ROAD.

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