

JANUARY 31, 2021

Albany, NY

Governor Cuomo Directs State Agencies to Mobilize Emergency Response Resources in Advance of Nor'easter Forecast to Affect State Through Tuesday with Snow, High Winds, Coastal Flooding

Snow Will Start Sunday Night Downstate and Continue Through Tuesday Evening Upstate

Up To 18 Inches of Snow Forecast For New York City, Long Island and Mid-Hudson Regions, Wind Gusts Could Top 60 Mph on Eastern End of Long Island

Other Areas Upstate Could Receive More Than A Foot of Snow By Tuesday

Effective 5 a.m. Monday, Short and Long Tandems Banned on I-87 from NYC Line to Exit 24 in Albany, I-95 and I-287; Empty Trailers Banned on I-87 Between Exit 8 to Exit 21A, Berkshire Spur and Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge

Effective 5 a.m. Monday, Empty and Tandem Trailers also Banned on I-84 from Pennsylvania State Line to Connecticut State line, Route 17 East of Binghamton to New Jersey State Line and Entire Length of I-684

Potential Impacts Include Dangerous Travel, Power Outages, Multiple Rounds of Flooding in Low-Lying Coastal Areas Through Tuesday Night

Governor Cuomo today directed state agencies to mobilize emergency response resources as a winter storm moving toward New York is expected to develop into a nor'easter and produce more than a foot of snow in several locations. Starting Sunday night downstate and continuing through Tuesday evening, New York City, Long Island and the Mid-Hudson regions could see snow totals up to 18 inches and wind gusts up to 60 mph, especially on the eastern end of Long Island. Other areas upstate are expected to receive a widespread 8 to 16 inches of snow starting tomorrow morning and lasting through Tuesday night. The storm is expected to create dangerous travel conditions and potential power outages due to the combination of heavy snow and gusty winds, as well as flooding of low-lying areas in coastal locations for several days.

Given the expected impacts the storm will have on New York's transportation system, short and long tandems will be banned on portions of the New York State Thruway effective Monday at 5 a.m. Specifically, this includes I-87 from the New York City Line to Exit 24 in Albany, as well as on all of I-95 and I-287. Additionally, empty trailers will also be banned on I-87 between Exit 8 to Exit 21A, on the Berkshire Spur and on the Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge.

Trailer bans are also being implemented on roadways outside of the Thruway system. Beginning 5 a.m. Monday, empty trailers and tandem trailers will be banned on I-84 from Pennsylvania state line to Connecticut state line, on Route 17 East of Binghamton to the New Jersey state line, and on the entire length of I-684.

"New York is directly in the path of a major storm poised to become a nor'easter as it approaches the east coast late Sunday night," **Governor Cuomo said.** "State agencies are already in the process of deploying resources to areas expected to be the hardest hit. While this work continues, we will remain

in constant communication with our local partners to provide any support that may be necessary, as well as with utility companies to ensure power outages are immediately addressed. As we know, these storms can be unpredictable, so I strongly urge all New Yorkers to keep a very close eye on the weather over the next few days and take steps to keep yourself and your loved ones safe."

Snow is expected to begin Sunday night downstate and continue through Wednesday morning for some locations in the North Country. New York City, Long Island and counties in the lower Mid-Hudson region are forecast to receive the highest snow totals, with up to 18 inches by Tuesday morning and wind gusts up to 60 mph on Long Island. 45 to 50 mph wind gusts are also expected in New York City and the lower Hudson Valley. The Southern Tier, Capital Region, and Mohawk Valley will see a widespread 8 to 16 inches by Tuesday afternoon, and some areas in the North Country will see up to 10 inches by Wednesday.

Coastal areas of Long Island and Queens could experience multiple rounds of flooding, especially during high tides and in vulnerable, low-lying locations. Current forecasts call for two to three feet of inundation above ground level in low lying, vulnerable areas, particularly on Monday night, which could result in numerous road closures and cause widespread flooding of low-lying parking lots, parks, lawns and homes/businesses with basements near the waterfront.

For a complete listing of weather watches and warnings in your area, visit your area's National Weather Service [website](#).

Agency Preparations

Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services

The New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services' Emergency Operations Center remains activated due to the COVID-19 pandemic and will closely monitor weather conditions, coordinate state response operations and remain in contact with localities throughout the duration of the event. State stockpiles are prepared to deploy assets to localities to support any storm-related needs, including pumps, chainsaws, sandbags, generators, cots, blankets and bottled water.

Department of Transportation

The State Department of Transportation is prepared to respond with 3,645 supervisors and operators available statewide. In addition, to support snow and ice activities in critical areas, a total of 162 staff including: 150 plow truck operators, 4 plow crew supervisors, 2 Equipment Operator Instructors, 4 mechanics, 1 mechanic supervisor and 1 safety officer; 24 plow trucks, 6 snow blowers and 2 mechanic service trucks are being deployed from other regions. They are distributed as follows:

Mid-Hudson

- Receiving 25 plow operators, 4 supervisors, 5 plow trucks and 2 snowblowers from Central NY
- Receiving 10 plow operators and 5 plow trucks from Finger Lakes
- Receiving 40 plow operators from Western NY
- Receiving 11 plow operators from North Country
- Southern Tier (Binghamton area):

- Receiving 10 plow operators and 4 plow trucks from Western Southern Tier
- Receiving 2 snow blowers from North Country

Long Island

- Receiving 10 plow operators, 5 plow trucks, and 1 snow blower from Capital Region
- Receiving 20 plow operators, 5 plow trucks, 1 snow blower, 2 mechanics, and 1 mechanic service truck from Mohawk Valley
- Receiving 1 equipment operator instructor from Central NY
- Receiving 1 mechanic supervisor from Western NY
- Receiving 1 equipment operator instructor from Western So. Tier
- Receiving 24 plow operators, 2 mechanics, and 1 mechanic service truck from North Country
- Receiving 1 safety officer from NYC

Regional crews are currently engaged in snow and ice preparations. All residency locations will remain staffed for 24/7 operation throughout the duration of the event and priority cleanup operations. All available snow and ice equipment is ready to deploy. Fleet mechanics in affected areas will be staffing all main residency locations 24/7 to perform repairs and keep trucks on the road. Statewide equipment numbers are as follows:

- 1,625 large plow trucks
- 175 medium duty plows
- 52 tow plows
- 316 large loaders
- 38 snow blowers

Beginning 5 a.m. Monday there will be a ban on empty trailers and tandem trailers on the following roads:

- I-84 from Pennsylvania state line to Connecticut state line
- Route 17, East of Binghamton to New Jersey state line
- I-684 entire length

Thruway Authority

The Thruway Authority has 694 operators and supervisors ready to respond with 252 large snow plows, 100 medium snow plows, 11 tow plows and 63 loaders across the state with more than 119,000 tons of road salt on hand. The Thruway Authority plans to shift an additional 10 snow plows, 1 large snow blower and 20 operators from its Buffalo and Syracuse Divisions to the New York Division where the storm is expected to have a greater impact.

Variable Message Signs and social media are utilized to alert motorists of winter weather conditions on the Thruway.

The Thruway Authority encourages motorists to download its [mobile app](#) which is available for free on iPhone and Android devices. The app provides motorists direct access to real-time traffic and navigation assistance while on the go. Motorists can also sign up for [TRANSalert](#) e-mails which provide the latest traffic conditions along the Thruway [here](#).

All Tandems, short and long, will be banned on the New York State Thruway effective Monday at 5 a.m. in the following locations:

- I-87 from NYC Line to Exit 24 (Albany)
- I-95 (New England Thruway)
- I-287 (Cross Westchester Expressway)

In addition, effective 5 a.m. Monday, all empty trailers will be banned on the Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge, I-87 between Exit 8 to Exit 21A and the Berkshire Spur.

Department of Environmental Conservation

DEC Environmental Conservation Police Officers, Forest Rangers, Emergency Management staff, and regional staff are on alert and monitoring the developing situation and actively patrolling areas and infrastructure likely to be impacted by severe weather. All available assets are positioned to assist with any emergency response.

Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

New York State Park Police and park personnel are on alert and closely monitoring weather conditions and impacts. Response equipment is being fueled, tested and prepared for storm response use. Park visitors should check parks.ny.gov or call their local park office for the latest updates regarding park hours, openings and closings.

Department of Public Service

New York's utilities have approximately 5,500 workers available to engage in damage assessment, response and restoration efforts across New York State. Department of Public Service staff will track the utilities' work throughout the storm event and will ensure the utilities shift the appropriate staffing to the regions anticipated to experience the greatest impact.

New York Power Authority / Canal Corporation

The New York Power Authority and the Canal Corporation staff has performed preparations for the forecasted weather to ensure all facilities, assets and equipment are secured and ready. The Power Authority is prepared to support power restoration activities if needed.

New York State Police

State Police are prepared to deploy additional Troopers as needed to affected areas. All State Police specialized vehicles, including four-wheel drive vehicles, snowmobiles and Utility Task Vehicles, are

staged and ready for immediate response. All Troop emergency power and communications equipment has been tested.

Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metropolitan Transportation Authority personnel are hard at work to ensure safe, reliable service continues throughout the storm and aftermath. MTA employees are poised to spread salt and clear platforms and stairs of snow and ice, keep signals, switches, third rail operating, remove any downed trees that may fall across tracks, and attend to any weather-related challenges during the storm.

Long Island Rail Road will operate a weekend schedule Monday and Tuesday as crews respond to the storm.

MTA Bridges and Tunnels is proactively implementing an empty and tandem tractor trailer ban at 6 a.m. Monday.

Buses will operate reduced service based on anticipated lower ridership. All local buses will also be fitted with tire chains. Articulated buses will be replaced by standard buses beginning Sunday night.

Customers are strongly encouraged avoid unnecessary travel, check new.mta.info for the latest service updates, and to use extreme caution while navigating the system, especially on outdoor platforms and stairs. Customers should also sign up for real-time service alerts via text or email. These alerts are also available via the MTA's apps: MYmta, Metro-North Train Time and Long Island Rail Road Train Time.

Port Authority

The Port Authority urges motorists to use caution during this week's winter storm; speed restrictions may be in effect at the bridges as well as along roadways to and from the crossings.

Travelers through the Port Authority's airports, bus terminal and bus station are encouraged to reach out to carriers and airlines directly for the latest information on delays, cancellations or rebookings. For the latest information about Port Authority facilities, please check social media, sign up for PA alerts or download one of the PA mobile apps.

Safety Tips

Winter Safety

Some of the most important tips for safe driving include:

- When winter storms strike, do not drive unless necessary.
- Use caution on bridges as ice can form quicker than on roads.
- If you must travel, make sure your car is stocked with survival gear like blankets, a shovel, flashlight and extra batteries, extra warm clothing, set of tire chains, battery booster cables, quick energy foods and brightly colored cloth to use as a distress flag.
- If you have a cell phone or other communications device such as a two-way radio available for your use, keep the battery charged and keep it with you whenever traveling. If you should become stranded, you will be able to call for help, advising rescuers of your location.

The leading cause of death and injuries during winter storms is transportation accidents. Before getting behind the wheel, make sure that your vehicle is clear of ice and snow; good vision is key to good driving. Plan your stops and keep more distance between cars. Be extra alert and remember that snowdrifts can hide smaller children. Always match your speed to the road and weather conditions.

It is important for motorists on all roads to note that snowplows travel at speeds up to 35 mph, which in many cases is lower than the posted speed limit, to ensure that salt being dispersed stays in the driving lanes and does not scatter off the roadways. Oftentimes on interstate highways, snowplows will operate side by side, as this is the most efficient and safe way to clear several lanes at one time.

Motorists and pedestrians should also keep in mind that snowplow drivers have limited lines of sight, and the size and weight of snowplows can make it very difficult to maneuver and stop quickly. Snow blowing from behind the plow can severely reduce visibility or cause whiteout conditions. Motorists should not attempt to pass snowplows or follow too closely. The safest place for motorists to drive is well behind the snowplows where the roadway is clear and salted.

Flood Safety

- Know the county in which you live and the names of nearby cities. Severe weather warnings are issued on a county basis.
- Learn the safest route from your home or business to high, safe ground should you have to leave in a hurry.
- Develop and practice a 'family escape' plan and identify a meeting place if family members become separated.
- Make an itemized list of all valuables including furnishings, clothing and other personal property. Keep the list in a safe place.
- Stockpile emergency supplies of canned food, medicine and first aid supplies and drinking water. Store drinking water in clean, closed containers
- Plan what to do with your pets.
- Have a portable radio, flashlights, extra batteries and emergency cooking equipment available.
- Keep your automobile fueled. If electric power is cut off, gasoline stations may not be able to pump fuel for several days. Have a small disaster supply kit in the trunk of your car.
- Find out how many feet your property is above and below possible flood levels. When predicted flood levels are broadcast, you can determine if you may be flooded.
- Keep materials like sandbags, plywood, plastic sheeting and lumber handy for emergency waterproofing
- Have disaster supplies on hand, including:
 - Flashlight and extra batteries;
 - Battery-operated radio and extra batteries;

- First aid kit and manual;
- Emergency food and water;
- Non-electric can opener;
- Essential medicines; and
- Checkbook, cash, credit cards, and ATM cards.

For more safety tips for all types of weather events, visit the DHSES website at www.dhSES.ny.gov/oem/safety-info/index.cfm.