



## VDOT's 2008-2009 WINTER WEATHER PREPAREDNESS

Nov. 19, 2008

**Jimmy White, Emergency Response Initiative Director**

**Jeff Caldwell, Chief of Communications**

# VDOT FOCUS ON EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- **Feb. 12 ice storm in Northern Virginia prompted renewed focus**
- **Immediate action steps implemented to ensure adequate coverage for Springfield Interchange and storms impacts around the state**
- **Established an aggressive program to improve VDOT's emergency response protocols and practices, and to strengthen its maintenance force.**
- **In April 2008, VDOT delivered a long-term forward plan to refocus the agency on its emergency response mission**
- **VDOT vowed to develop a comprehensive training program to educate front-line maintenance supervisors on all of the best practices available for snow and ice removal, and other emergencies**

# FIRST STEP—SNOW AND ICE RESPONSE

- **Established an emergency response team from districts and Central Office for planning**
- **Completed comprehensive review of anti-icing techniques and technology best practices**
- **Developed of improved command and control structure and implementation of duty officers**
- **Held Snowfighters skills competitions around the Commonwealth**
- **Developing of new contracts for road weather information to improve data**

# FIRST STEP—SNOW AND ICE RESPONSE

- **Developed VATraffic internal tracking system to improve information sharing**
- **Developed comprehensive training program to educate front-line maintenance supervisors on best practices available for snow and ice removal and other emergencies**
- **Trained 150+ front-line supervisors and key emergency response managers during Transportation Emergency Response Institute**

# TERI

- **Curriculum taught by internal and external industry experts**
  - **Anti-Icing**
  - **Command and Control**
  - **Contracting and Procurement**
  - **Technology**
  - **Communications**
- **Four sessions held in Blacksburg and Richmond**

# ANTI-ICING

- **Salt brine identified as leading technology**
  - **Effective**
  - **Cost efficient**
  - **Easy to make**
- **Equipment purchase ongoing to support pilot projects**
- **At least 200 miles identified in each district for pilot**
- **Specific focus on Springfield Interchange**

# TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENTS

## WEATHER INFORMATION

- **RWIS Upgrades**
- **Meteorologist contract**
- **VATraffic**
- **Enhanced pavement sensor network**

## COMMUNICATIONS

- **Repaired and enhanced variable message network**
- **Enhancing VDOT radio network**
- **Improved Web sites for public information**
- **Focused outreach to media**

# DEMONSTRATING PREPAREDNESS

- **Media outreach**
  - 12 press conferences held Nov. 10
  - Coverage in all major media markets
  - Dozens of positive media stories
    - A few stories focused on change in snow budget, but this was not tied to financial challenges
- **VDOT launches new snow preparedness Web site**
  - <http://www.virginiadot.org/news/snowseason.asp>
  - Interactive videos, audio, fact sheets
  - Already linked on You Tube and picked up by media outlets statewide





## News



Home &gt; News &gt; Snow

Contact Us | Search VirginiaDOT.org

Travel Center

News

Info Center

Business Center

Programs

Projects and Studies





About VDOT

Jobs

Site Map

## Safety First: VDOT Prepares for Winter

The Virginia Department of Transportation is planning ahead to ensure that all state-maintained roadways remain safe during winter weather and that people, services and goods can get from one corner of the commonwealth to the other. [Details >](#)

- Virginia Department of Emergency Management's [snow information page](#)
- [Prepare your car for winter driving](#) 
- [Snowfighters: An emergency response training skills competition](#) 
- [How VDOT clears snow](#)  (WMV, 3 MB, 1:41)
- [Safe winter driving](#)  (WMV, 2.5 MB, :55)

Download the free video player [here](#). If you need any of this content in an accessible (federal section 508) format, call 804-786-2801.



# KEY MESSAGES

- Safety is VDOT's top priority and VDOT crews have been preparing for months to keep roads safe during winter weather.
- *There will not be significant changes to levels of service due to budget or any other reason.*
- VDOT aims to have all roads passable within 48 hours after the storm ends.
- Crews first clear interstates, primary roads and major secondary roads that connect localities, fire stations, employment hubs, military posts, schools, hospitals and other important public facilities.
  - Secondary roads and subdivision streets will be treated if multi-day storms hit the Commonwealth, but crews will focus efforts on those roads that carry the most traffic.
- This year we are working smarter, using technology to better target our efforts and implementing statewide anti-icing programs to work ahead of storms rather than react to them.

# KEY MESSAGES

- **VDOT has prepared for this winter with:**
  - **\$75.8 million snow budget with \$30 million reserve**
  - **234,000 tons of salt**
  - **62,200 tons of sand**
  - **More than 3,200 state crewmembers**
  - **3,700 pieces of state snow-removal equipment**
  - **4,300 private-sector pieces of snow-removal equipment and personnel to be used if needed**
  - **310,000 gallons of liquid calcium chloride**
  - **142,700 gallons of liquid magnesium chloride**