

# Safety Newsletter

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

DECEMBER 2023

## Sharing the Road with Snow Removal Equipment

In North Dakota there is plenty of opportunity to travel in snowy conditions. It's important to remember that winter travel can be dangerous. The North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) offers tips for sharing the road with snowplows.

To ensure the safety of everyone, follow these tips when you meet snow removal equipment while traveling.

1. Stay well back from snowplows. Sometimes they have to stop and back up. Plow drivers can't see directly behind themselves, and plows also throw sanding material.
2. Remember, don't crowd the plow and give them room to groom!
3. Know where the plow is on multi-lane roadways. The plow could be in either lane or on the shoulder.

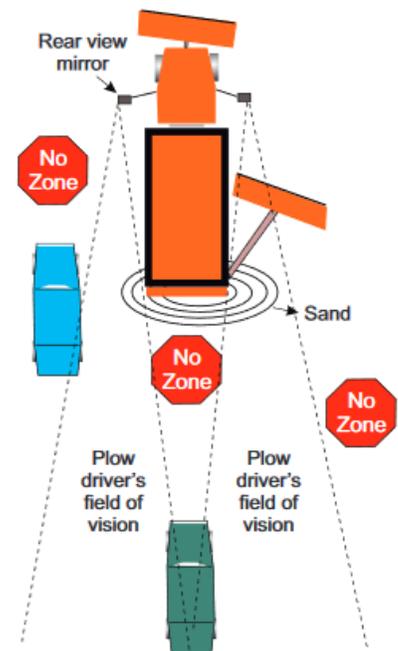
4. Be extremely cautious when passing a snowplow. They can get pushed sideways by drifts and hard snow-pack.
5. Never drive through "whiteouts" caused by crosswinds or plowing light snow.



6. Snowplows pull over and stop frequently to allow traffic to pass. Be patient and wait until you can see.
7. Watch for plow trucks on interstate ramps or as they turn around on "authorized vehicle only" cross-overs.
8. Don't assume you'll have good traction because the road "looks" sanded. The sand can sink

into the snow-pack, leaving a slick surface. Slow down and drive according to the conditions. Most winter crashes are caused by driving too fast for conditions.

### "NO ZONE" FOR SNOWPLOWS



### STAY BACK - STAY ALIVE

Snowplows have poor visibility to the rear and blind spots at the rear, both sides, and at mirror and door positions. Remember to stay out of the plow's NO ZONE. It could save your life!



## Distracted Driving Awareness

As we move into a season of driving conditions that may be less than ideal, it is important to remember that distracted driving – no matter the season – should never be part of the equation. As a reminder, the Safety Office would like to provide the following guidance as you take to the roads:

**The primary responsibility of a driver is to operate a motor vehicle safely.** Distracted driving is any non-driving activity a person engages in while operating a motor vehicle (texting, dialing a phone, reading, eating, grooming, etc.)

Failure to maintain control of a motor vehicle while distracted is a citable traffic offense. (NDCC 39-08-25)



**Text messaging is prohibited for all drivers** (NDCC 39-08-23) This includes NDSU employees driving a state government fleet vehicle, rental vehicle or their own vehicle while conducting state business. **Per ND State Fleet Policy Manual, employees are prohibited from using hand-held cell phones while operating a vehicle.** Drivers of State Fleet and other vehicles while conducting state official business may not

use cell phones (including hands free) or any other mobile devices while operating the vehicle while in motion or stopped at a stop sign or traffic signal. This includes, but is not limited to, answering or making phone calls, engaging in phone conversations and reading or responding to emails, instant messages, social media or text messages. Please refer to the [University Police and Safety Office Safe Operating Procedures for the Distracted Driving Guidelines](#) and requirements per [Policy 166](#).



## NDSU Safety Program: Continuing to Make an Impact

North Dakota State University continues to promote and stand firmly behind a culture of Safety and Wellbeing for students, staff and faculty. Our continued approach in the proactive attitude on safety has ensured that we do our utmost to keep employees safe while working within the scope of their employment. This mindset not only keeps us safe, but it also saves the University money on the workers' compensation premiums that we pay annually.

The Safety Office is proud to say that the employees of NDSU have accumulated an overall savings of \$590,000 on our workers' compensation premium through a significant percentage on both our experience rate and the completion of discount programs provided by ND Risk Management. Our experience rate is calculated by the severity of our injuries as well as the frequency of our medical visits for work related injuries. With an experience rate of -32.8%, that alone was a savings to

NDSU of well over \$310,000!

Although we can look at this as a significant financial savings to the University, the more important takeaway is that the safety training courses, safe operation procedures, safety inspections, incident reporting processes and so much more are making an impact.



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## Seasonal Reminder

**WINTER LESSONS:  
HOW TO WALK ON ICE**

**1** Normally, when we walk, our legs' ability to support our weight is split mid-stride.

**2** Walking this way on ice forces each leg to support the weight of the body at an angle that is not perpendicular to the surface of the ice, resulting in a nasty fall.

*oblique angle = nasty fall*

**1** To walk on ice, keep your center of gravity over your front leg.

**2** One animal that has figured this out is a penguin. Think of yourself as a penguin and you'll be all right.

**WRONG WAY** **RIGHT WAY**