

PRESS RELEASE PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Maintenance Director Anthony Branch

(810) 767-4920

abranch@gcrc.org

GCRC Website: www.gcrc.org



The Genesee County Road Commission reminds motorists: "Don't Crowd the Plow!"

Flint, Michigan. ---

In cooperation with a joint education effort led by the County Road Association of Michigan (CRAM) and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) the Genesee County Road Commission is urging motorists to remember good driving habits in winter weather conditions that will make the roadways safer.

"Our road crews put their lives on the line daily to keep the roads in Genesee County safe and open to commerce," said Manager-Director John Daly. "We will continue to do our part to keep the roads cleared, but motorists must remember to drive with caution no matter how much salt we use or how often the roads are plowed."

The Genesee County Road Commission is responsible for maintaining nearly 2,000 miles of roads, including over 400 miles of state trunk line under contract with MDOT, and it takes about five days to plow all of these roads under normal conditions. Plowing the county's roads is an enormous job, roughly equivalent to plowing a road from Flint to Key West, Florida, and back.

A steady decrease in road funding and an increase in costs have caused state and local agencies to alter their winter maintenance plans. Drivers have been put on notice that plowing priorities and the use of less salt will make their job even more important than in years past.

But road crews must have ample room in order to safely clear the many miles of roadway of snow and ice. "Every year, despite the flashing lights, poor driver behavior near snowplows leads to collisions that can be deadly," said Maintenance Director Anthony Branch. "To minimize these dangers, motorists must keep their focus on driving and changes in road conditions."

The Genesee County Road Commission offers the following reminders for motorists:

- Snowplows have limited visibility and drivers cannot see directly behind their trucks;
- Snowplows often throw up snow clouds, reducing visibility on all sides of the truck;
- Motorists should never attempt to pass a moving snowplow on the right. With new, wing-plow technology, the blade can clear the shoulder and the lane of travel simultaneously. Motorists attempting an illegal pass through a snow cloud on the right and/or shoulder of the road most likely won't see the plow blade and run the risk of a serious crash; and
- Always wear your safety belt and allow extra time to reach your destinations this winter.

“Remember to give road crews room to work so we can clear the roads as quickly as possible,” Branch added. “And please - Don't Crowd the Plow!”

For more information contact John Daly or Anthony Branch at (810) 767-4920. Photos and safety tips are available at www.gcrc.org/Winter%20Survival%20Guide.html and at www.micountyroads.org/winter.htm.

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Remember – in Ice and Snow, Take it Slow!