

News Release

Feb. 25, 2019

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MnDOT reopens I-35 south of Albert Lea and northbound lanes of I-35 between Albert Lea and Owatonna. Southbound I-35 between Owatonna and Albert Lea remains closed due to snow drifts and icy conditions

ALBERT LEA, Minn. (4:15 p.m.) – The Minnesota Department of Transportation has reopened the northbound lanes of Interstate 35 between Albert Lea and Owatonna, but southbound I-35 remains closed along this stretch due to snow drifts and icy conditions. Additionally, southbound I-35 south of Interstate 90 at Albert Lea is open to Iowa. MnDOT will have to temporarily close that portion of southbound I-35 in the coming hours because a vehicle will be removed further along the route in Iowa.

Motorists traveling at this hour are using slow speeds to travel on I-35, as well as many roads in the region and the driving surface is rough and icy. Motorists should plan for significantly longer travel times.

Road openings will appear on MnDOT's road conditions map at www.511mn.org, via news release, Twitter and Facebook when those roads are opened. More roads are expected to open later today, but much depends on the equipment and progress of removing vehicles that were stuck on the roads during the storm.

MnDOT urges motorists to always be attentive, drive with caution, slow down in [work zones](#) and never enter a road blocked with barriers or cones. For real-time traffic and travel information in Minnesota, visit www.511mn.org or get the free smartphone app at [Google Play](#) or the [App Store](#).

MnDOT snowplow operators will do their part to make highways safe and motorists should remember to:

- **Stay alert** for snowplows, which turn or exit frequently and often with little warning. They also may travel over centerlines or partially in traffic to further improve road conditions.
- **Stay back** at least 10 car lengths behind the plow. Don't drive into a snow cloud.
- **Slow down** to a safe speed for current conditions.
- **Turn on your headlights and wear your seat belt.**
- **Turn off the cruise control.**
- **Be patient** and remember snowplows are working to improve road conditions for your trip.
- **Don't drive distracted.**
- **Check MnDOT's road conditions map** at www.511mn.org

For additional tips on safe winter driving, go to <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/workzone/winter.html>.

In southeast Minnesota there are 101 snowplows that work the state highways in the 11-county MnDOT District 6 plowing 3,774 lane miles. During winter weather events, MnDOT routinely deploys two shifts of drivers in the snowplows, who can keep the snowplowing effort going around the clock by working 12-hour shifts.