

AUGUSTA, Maine — The Maine Department of Transportation, the Maine State Police and AAA of Northern New England are urging motorists to slow down in winter driving conditions, give plow trucks plenty of room, and prepare their cars for snowy weather before heading out on the roads. Thanksgiving weekend generally marks the beginning of the winter driving season in Maine and it also is one of the heaviest traffic weekends of the year, the MDOT noted in a press release.

Each year, the region's first snowfall brings a rash of crashes to Maine's roads as drivers reacquaint themselves with winter conditions.

Maine's snowiest month is January but crash statistics show that there are more winter weather-related crashes in December than any other month, the MDOT said. In fact, even though Maine experiences winter weather into the month of March, winter weather-related crashes continue to decline each month from December into March.

Speed is often the major cause of winter weather-related crashes, the MDOT said. Drivers need to slow down since stopping on ice or snow requires extra time and distance.

Plow operators need plenty of room to do their work safely, the press release said. Drivers shouldn't tailgate or pass a plow unless it is absolutely necessary and safe to do so. Plow truck operators have to deal with a [limited field of vision](#) while plowing, so drivers should stay alert and keep a safe distance between their car and the plow.

Drivers can find out the latest road conditions by going to [511Maine.gov](#). The Google Maps-based 511 website can give drivers up-to-date road conditions that are supplied by MDOT plow operators and Maine state troopers.

For information on winter driving, visit [maineDOT.gov](#).