



Division 12

COUNTIES SERVED | Alexander, Catawba, Cleveland, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln



One of the trucks on site at the Gaston County maintenance yard.

The Department of Transportation doesn't wait for the first cold snap to be ready for inclement weather. Maintenance crews across Division 12, which include Alexander, Catawba, Cleveland, Gaston, Iredell and Lincoln counties, continue to prepare for whatever winter has in store.

Across the division, 203 employees are trained to use 214 pieces of equipment like tandem trucks, spreaders and motor graders. Crews typically perform dry runs of snow and ice routes in October and November to make drivers familiar with routes in each county and to assess any necessary equipment repairs.

In addition, the division stores up to 11,970 tons of salt and 4,635 tons of sand. Crews also can make up to 123,000 gallons of brine - a mixture of water and 23 percent salt used to pre-treat roadways before a storm hits. When a storm threatens the area, NCDOT pre-treats roadways, bridges and overpasses to keep ice from bonding to the pavement.

"We start at least two days in advance if the event's getting ready to happen," says Gaston County Maintenance Engineer Johnny Murdock.

You can find out more about how NCDOT gets ready for winter storms on the [DOT website](#). Motorists can also visit the [Traveler Services](#) section of NCDOT.gov for real-time travel information or follow NCDOT on [Twitter](#).

Wildfires Scorch Miles of Mountains Transportation Crews Assist when Asked

Stay Connected



NC Transportation Now

This week on [NC Transportation Now](#), employees are recognized for their heroism.

Transportation News

For more information about state transportation projects, initiatives and operations, visit our [online newsroom](#).

Christmas Driving Tips

As Christmas approaches, the Department of Transportation has some tips for navigating the highways safely during your travels.

- Leave early to get a head start. Travel at non-peak hours if possible.
- Stay alert.
- Be patient and obey the speed limit.
- Use alternative routes, when possible, to avoid traffic congestion.
- Stay informed. Real time travel information is available at www.ncdot.gov or you can follow NCDOT on Twitter.
- Don't drive drowsy. Travel at times you are normally awake, and take frequent breaks.

ASHEVILLE - Department of Transportation crews posted a handful of digital message boards in Western North Carolina that roads were closed due to wildfire during November.

More than 20 separate wildfire complexes scorched in excess of 70,000 acres and forced neighborhood evacuations from Swain County to McDowell County. Pockets of North Carolina were left with hazardous air quality.

Despite the devastation, only four major highways needed to be closed. Transportation officials worked with various agencies to organize the closures and set up marked detours.

A seven-mile stretch of U.S. 64/74A and N.C. 9 in Rutherford County - the main route through Chimney Rock Village and Lake Lure - closed on Nov. 11 due to the Party Rock Fire. The same fire closed a shorter stretch of N.C. 9 on Nov. 16. Both opened on the evening of Nov. 20 and allowed business to open the next day for residents and visitors.

A fire in Swain County closed 14 miles of U.S. 74/N.C. 19 through the Nantahala Gorge for about 48 hours starting on Nov. 12. In McDowell County, the Clear Creek Fire forced the closure of N.C. 80 from Old Toms Creek to the Blue Ridge Parkway.

In all, less than 35 miles of roads were closed to help crews battle the wildfires, which consumed more than 110 square miles of land in Western North Carolina. Governor McCrory declared a state of emergency and a burn ban on Nov. 11 and transportation officials reminded motorists of the ban through digital messaging on message mounts in the mountains.

"We were able to help and do our part with the closures and the detours," Division 13 Maintenance Engineer Mark Gibbs said. "We were happy to assist our friends at the N.C. Forest Service, the U.S. Forest Service and all of the local agencies."

- Avoid distracted driving.

We Need Your Input!

The N.C. Department of Transportation has opened the department's second annual customer survey.

All citizen feedback will be collected online at go.ncsu.edu/customerservice2016.

The survey takes 15 minutes to complete and the survey link is mobile friendly.

The N.C. General Assembly requires the survey to gauge how the transportation department is providing great customer service. Participation can help NCDOT identify ways to make North Carolina transportation services safer, more efficient and customer focused.

The online survey will close December 31.

The results will be available to the public on NCDOT.gov in 2017.

Save Money on Holiday Travel

Check out this [press release](#) for information on how to save money with the NC Quick Pass Transponder Sale.

NCDOT Helping Traffic Flow Smoothly Around Christmas Town, USA

The arrival of the holiday season means more traffic for the Gaston County community of McAdenville, also known as Christmas Town, USA. As thousands of visitors are expected to drive through the area, the Department of Transportation is



Hurricane Continues to Impact Eastern North Carolina ***Recovery to Continue into 2017***

Hurricane Matthew continues to impact eastern North Carolina.

More than 600 roads in the state were damaged by the Oct. 8 hurricane. Transportation workers have been tirelessly assessing and repairing the damage.

At press time, approximately 153 roads remain affected from hurricane damage throughout eastern North Carolina.

Debris removal, shoulder repairs and pipe replacements will likely continue throughout December and into 2017.

Several division engineers thank citizens for their patience during this difficult time. NCDOT personnel are looking forward to completing all of the Hurricane Matthew repairs.

For real time information on roads, check the Traveler Services section on www.ncdot.gov or follow NCDOT on Twitter.

Thanksgiving Click It or Ticket Campaign Yields 1,961 Safety Belt Violations

State and local law enforcement officers issued 1,961 seat belt and 340 child passenger violations during the Governor's Highway Safety Program's Thanksgiving *Click It or Ticket* enforcement campaign on Nov. 20-26.

"No one ever plans to be in a traffic crash, so the *Click It or*

working to ensure traffic flows smoothly, both for motorists heading to McAdenville and for drivers passing through to other destinations.

The town kicked off its 61st year of this popular free attraction on Thursday, Dec. 1, and it continues through Monday, Dec. 26. Visitors can enjoy the festive light displays Monday through Friday from 5:30 - 9:30 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 5:30 - 11 p.m.

"The best time to avoid the heavy traffic is to visit Monday through Thursday", says Steve Rankin with the Christmas Town Committee. "Heavier traffic is typical on Friday and Saturday nights."

NCDOT will place message boards on I-85 to inform motorists of the following:

- Drivers coming from Charlotte should use U.S. 74 (Wilkinson Boulevard) into McAdenville; an alternate route is from I-85 South to Exit 27 (N.C. 273) to U.S. 74;
- Motorists driving north on I-85 should use Exit 22 (Lowell) into McAdenville; and
- The ramp from I-85 North to Exit 23 (N.C. 7) will be closed nightly during events.

Due to the large number of vehicles expected in the area, motorists should expect delays and slow down during the holiday season. One option for visitors is to arrive early, between 5 - 5:15 p.m., find a parking spot and wait for the lights to come on at 5:30 p.m. Walking through McAdenville

Ticket campaign is about saving lives and changing the way people think," said Don Nail, director of the Governor's Highway Safety Program. "The seat-belt enforcement efforts are about reminding people that failing to buckle-up is not worth risking a ticket, a traffic crash, or your life."

Over the holiday enforcement period, state and local law enforcement agencies held 2,786 checkpoints and stepped-up patrols, issuing 3,209 traffic and criminal violations. The top five counties for occupant restraint violations were:

- Wake County: 210
- Guilford County: 100
- Robeson County: 100
- Forsyth County: 99
- Lenoir County: 96
- Cabarrus County: 90

In its 23rd year, the *Click It or Ticket* education and enforcement campaign reminds motorists that wearing a seat belt is the single most effective action that a person can take to save their life. The campaign aims to increase driver seat belt usage rates and reduce fatalities across North Carolina and has yielded significant results over the years. Between 2010 and 2014, an average of 545 lives were saved per year due to the use of seat belts in passenger vehicles.

The overall seat belt usage rate for North Carolina increased from 89.9 percent in 2015 to 91.7 percent in 2016. The Governor's Highway Safety Program believes that increased enforcement efforts from law enforcement and the expansion of public awareness campaigns will result in maintaining a high usage rate.

For county by [county totals](#) and more information regarding the [Click It or Ticket](#) program, visit the [GHSP website](#)

NOTABLE NEWS RELEASES

[Division 12 Transportation Crews are Ready for Winter Weather](#)

[Traffic Shifts Begin Tonight for I-40/I-77 Project in Statesville](#)

[Get Informed on Drone Safety This Holiday Season](#)

[Traffic Shift Scheduled for Saturday Night on U.S. 21 in Statesville](#)

offers another way to see the lights while hearing the church chimes ringing in the background.

Pedestrians are asked to remain on the sidewalks and not enter homeowners' private property.

To find out more about Christmas Town USA, visit the [event website](#).

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