

## News Release

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### MnDOT advising no travel on portions of I-35, Hwy 19 in SE Minnesota

**ROCHESTER, Minn.** (3 p.m.) – Interstate 35 southbound through Owatonna is closed at this hour because of a series of vehicle crashes that have stopped traffic, according to the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Additionally, MnDOT is advising no travel on I-35 from Highway 30 south of Owatonna to the Elko/New Market exit north of Northfield because of dangerous travel conditions and a number of vehicle crashes.

MnDOT has also advised no travel along Highway 19 east and west of I-35 because of similar road conditions at this hour.

The areas are part of a Blizzard Warning issued by the National Weather Service. Overall, much of southeast Minnesota is part of a Winter Storm Warning. MnDOT cautions drivers on traveling during the current winter storm.

A series of vehicle spinouts were also reported on Highway 52 between Zumbrota and Cannon Falls at this hour. If motorists do need to travel, it is best to stay off the road. Please consult MnDOT's road conditions map at [www.511mn.org](http://www.511mn.org).

In southeast Minnesota there are 102 snowplows on the state highways in the 11-county MnDOT District 6. MnDOT has all of its plows on the road, but the driving conditions remain challenging because of the rate of snowfall. In southeast Minnesota, MnDOT plows 3,774 lane miles. An average route for drivers is 31 miles.

MnDOT snowplow operators will do their part to make highways safe. 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.**

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

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