



MEDIA RELEASE

OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR TIM BURCHETT

400 Main Street, Suite 615, Knoxville, TN 37902

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jennifer Linginfelter Michael Grider
215-4579 215-4750

December 18, 2012

Knox County's Highway Department prepares for winter weather

Knoxville, Tenn. – With winter just a few days away, Knox County Engineering & Public Works is taking a proactive approach by preparing its fleet for colder days ahead.

Last year, Knox County's Highway Department began installing brine tanks to be used together with regular granulated salt on major roadways and trouble spots during the winter. The new brine system includes three 1,600 gallon tanks mounted on tandem-axle dump trucks and seven 1,000 gallon tanks used with single-axle dump trucks.

Salt brine is a liquid mixture of salt and water that is applied to roadways to stop snow from sticking to pavements. Currently, Knox County has 20,000 gallons of liquid brine and 3,000 tons of granulated salt prepped and ready for use. An additional 2,000 gallons of calcium chloride, which is used to maintain the effectiveness of both liquid and granular material in extremely cold temperatures, is also on hand if needed.

“The Knox County Highway Department does a great job of keeping our roads safe during winter weather, and this brine system allows them to do their job more efficiently and at a savings to the taxpayers,” said Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett. “Ultimately, the most important aspect of our winter weather plan is public safety.”

Along with the added safety benefits of brine application, it is also a more cost-effective way to treat wintry roadways. When roads are pretreated with brine it lowers the need for regular salt and makes subsequent applications more effective.

In addition to cutting down on salt consumption, brine application has environmental advantages, too. Less salt on the side of the road means a smaller amount of it will go down our storm drains and into adjacent waterways.

Prior to and during any winter precipitation, the on-call supervisors monitor road conditions in the county and communicate with authorities to determine necessary precautions.

During winter storms, residents should stay off the roads whenever possible until crews have cleared the snow. Workers will start clearing main thoroughfares and known problem areas first, and then move on to complaints and secondary roads.

Depending on the severity of the weather, Knox County has a fleet of dump trucks equipped with snow plows, salt spreaders and brine tanks ready for dispatch. The county also has a dozen four-wheel-drive trucks equipped with smaller snow plows for use on more narrow roads.

###