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Press Release

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[Bridges & Tunnels](#)

IMMEDIATE

B&T Readies Winter Snow- and Ice-Fighting Equipment

MTA Bridges and Tunnels crews are hard at work getting its snow and ice-fighting equipment ready to battle the upcoming winter weather, including storing 9,000 tons of deicer and preparing its fleet of 102 trucks.

The agency already has one snow event under its belt thanks to the early Halloween storm. Last year, MTA Bridges and Tunnels Maintenance and Operation crews battled 8 storms, including the post-Christmas blizzard that socked the city with more than 20-inches of snow. All nine MTA crossings remained open throughout the Christmas blizzard and B&T crews worked around-the-clock during the storm towing dozens of stranded drivers, removing abandoned cars from toll plazas, and aiding other MTA agencies.

As a result of the 2010 Christmas storm, the MTA instituted new snowstorm preparedness procedures earlier this year for all of its agencies. Bridges and Tunnels personnel will institute snow procedures based on the following conditions:

- During light snowfall of less than 3 inches, motorists will be asked to operate at reduced speeds.
- Under heavy or severe snow conditions where accumulations of snow or a combination of mixed snow and ice are above 3 inches, some roadway lanes or ramp closures may occur while snow removal and deicing operations are performed. Motorists will be asked to operate at reduced speeds.
- In blizzard conditions, which may include dangerous whiteout conditions combining snow, high winds and/or ice, bridges, tunnels and entrance and exit ramps at all MTA crossings may be subject to closure for the safety of motorists and employees.

In addition, the agency's four suspension bridges --the Robert F. Kennedy, Verrazano-Narrows, Bronx-Whitestone and Throgs Neck may be intermittently closed following an ice/snow event due to dangerous conditions that are the result of falling ice from the bridges' suspender cables.

"We understand the inconvenience that closing a bridge causes but we ask drivers to understand that it is done to insure our customers' safety, which is our highest priority," said Bridges and Tunnels Vice President and Chief of Operations James Fortunato.

B&T's snow fleet is made up of regular maintenance trucks that are turned into snow plows and conveyors during winter and includes 45 vehicles equipped with ground temperature sensors. These sensors tell the operator and bridge managers if the roadway is in danger of freezing. The operator then spreads additional deicer where it is needed.

The Authority's bridges also are equipped with imbedded roadway sensors for temperature and above-ground atmospheric sensors that deliver real-time information on wind velocity, wind direction, humidity and precipitation via wireless communication. These sensors record data used to determine if speed restrictions are necessary.

"We use every technology available to battle winter storms and keep our bridges and tunnels as safe as possible for the 800,000 motorists who depend on us daily," said Bridges and Tunnels Chief Maintenance Officer Pat Parisi.

This includes deicer material used to melt snow and ice, which is sometimes referred to as salt but is actually rock salt coated with an anti-corrosive additive that inhibits corrosion of structural steel on the agency's bridges.

