



New York Severe Winter Storm

December 31, 2025

Office of the Governor

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Press release on December 30, 2025

“Ahead of New Year’s Holiday, Governor Hochul Urges New Yorkers to Exercise Caution As Severe Winter Weather and Lake Effect Snow Continues to Impact State

State of Emergency Remains in Effect Statewide

New Yorkers Encouraged To Remain Off Roads in Impacted Areas and Rearrange New Year’s Plans if Needed

Empty Tractor Trailer and Tandem Bans Lifted as of 12 p.m. Tuesday; Buffalo Skyway Reopened

Non-Essential State Employees Who Live or Work in Erie, Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Niagara, Wyoming, Oswego, Cayuga, Onondaga, Cortland, Madison, Wayne, Jefferson, Lewis and Oneida Counties Directed To Telecommute on Wednesday, December 31 Where Possible

Utility Workers Remain Engaged in Damage Assessment, Response, Repair and Restoration Efforts

New Yorkers Can Sign Up for Weather and Emergency Alerts by Texting 333111

Governor Kathy Hochul today reminded New Yorkers to remain cautious while traveling this week as severe winter weather conditions and lake effect snow will continue impacting the state. Lake effect snow off the shores of Lakes Erie and Ontario is expected to fall until Saturday, and while winds are expected to continue subsiding, blowing snow that creates hazardous driving conditions

remains a concern, especially during New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. New Yorkers, especially those in the Western New York, Central New York and the North Country, should pay close attention to their local forecasts, avoid unnecessary travel during periods of heavy snowfall, follow the direction of local authorities and telecommute whenever possible.

"As New Yorkers make plans to ring in the New Year, I urge everyone to use caution, prioritize safety and avoid any unnecessary travel in areas experiencing heavy snow and winter storms," Governor Hochul said. "My administration, emergency management teams, and plow and utility crews continue to actively respond to the ongoing winter weather to keep New Yorkers safe, and we stand ready to assist impacted communities over the holiday."

The latest forecasts indicate that areas south of Buffalo could see between two and three feet of additional lake effect snow through Saturday, with snow falling between one and two inches per hour in the heaviest bands. Lake effect snow also will continue to fall at a rate of one to two inches per hour off Lake Ontario in Central New York, potentially reaching the Mohawk Valley at times. The heaviest band of snow is expected to remain over the Syracuse Metro-Area throughout this afternoon and may re-intensify to snowfall rates of two to three inches tonight, before drifting north toward the Tug Hill Plateau during the overnight hours.

A clipper system will affect the rest of New York State on New Year's Eve, bringing anywhere from a dusting to three inches of snow. While winds are generally expected to subside to the 20 to 25 mph range, this wind strength combined with the dry snow consistency will continue the potential for blowing snow that could create hazardous driving conditions, especially on New Year's Eve. More cold air is expected to follow on Friday and reinvigorate the lake effect bands.

Numerous Winter Storm Warnings and Watches, Winter Weather Advisories, High Wind Warnings and Wind Advisories have been issued by the National Weather Service. New Yorkers should closely monitor their local forecasts and look for updates issued by the National Weather Service. For a complete listing of weather alerts, visit the National Weather Service website.

New Yorkers should also ensure that government emergency alerts are enabled on their mobile phones. They should also sign up for real-time weather and emergency alerts that will be texted to their phones by texting their county or borough name to 333111.

Agency Preparations

Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services

The Division's Office of Emergency Management is in contact with its local counterparts and is prepared to facilitate any local requests for assistance. State stockpiles are ready to deploy emergency response assets and supplies as needed. The State Watch Center, New York's 24/7 alert and warning hub, is monitoring the storm track and statewide impacts closely.

Department of Transportation

The State Department of Transportation continues to respond with 3,605 operators and supervisors available statewide. All impacted residency locations will remain staffed for 24/7 operations throughout the duration of the event and priority cleanup operations. Fleet mechanics in affected areas will be staffing all main residency locations 24/7 to perform repairs as needed to keep trucks on the road. Additionally, 36 staff members have been deployed from less impacted areas to support the response effort in Western New York.

Statewide equipment numbers are as follows:

- 1621 large plow trucks
- 339 large loaders
- 151 medium duty trucks with plow
- 37 large snow blowers
- 52 tow plows

Equipment Operator Instructors will be engaged in all areas receiving snowfall to perform plow operator training.

For real-time travel information, motorists should call 511 or visit www.511NY.org, New York State's official traffic and travel information source.

Thruway Authority

The Thruway Authority is currently responding with 686 operators and supervisors available and has shifted and deployed additional equipment from its Albany Division to Syracuse Division to support snow and ice operations. Deployed resources include two large plow trucks. Additional resources are on standby and ready to shift as needed.

Statewide equipment numbers and resources are listed below:

- 320 large and medium duty plow trucks
- 11 tow plows
- 62 loaders
- 114,000+ tons of salt on hand

Variable Message Signs and social media (X and Facebook) are utilized to alert motorists of winter weather conditions on the Thruway.

Drivers are reminded that Thruway snowplows travel at about 35 miles per hour — which in many cases is slower than the posted speed limit — in order to ensure that salt being dispersed stays in the driving lanes and does not scatter off the roadways. The safest place for motorists is well behind the snowplows where the roadway is clear and treated.

The Thruway Authority encourages motorists to download its mobile app which is available for free on iPhone and Android devices. The app provides motorists direct access to real-time traffic information, live traffic cameras, and navigation assistance while on the go. Motorists can also sign up for TRANSalert e-mails and follow @ThruwayTraffic on X for the latest traffic conditions along the Thruway.

Department of Public Service

The New York State Department of Public Service remains engaged with the regulated electric utilities throughout their response and restoration to the currently evolving weather system. The Department's priority remains on safeguarding reliable and resilient electric service for New Yorkers throughout this storm by maintaining regulatory oversight of the utilities' preparedness and response to any outages that may occur as a result of the weather.

New York's utilities in the forecasted impact area have activated their internal command structures, continue performing required outreach activities, and have engaged their emergency response plans. The utilities have approximately 7,707 workers available statewide to engage in damage assessment, response, repair, and restoration efforts across New York State. This number includes more than 2,207 mutual aid workers secured by the utilities to support response and restoration efforts across the areas forecasted to receive the greatest impacts. Department staff will continue to track utilities' work throughout the event.

In accordance with regulatory requirements, National Grid will provide dry ice and bottled water for distribution today from 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. at the following locations:

- Erie County - City of Buffalo Fire Department, 860 Hertel Ave, Buffalo, NY;
- Niagara County - Niagara Falls Fire Department Station 8, 20 Hyde Park Blvd, Niagara Falls, NY; and,
- Genesee County - Batavia Fire Department, 18 Evans St, Batavia, NY 14020.

The Department has additional information available on Winter Preparedness, including Winter Safety and current consumer protections available at: Winter

Preparedness | Department of Public Service. The public is encouraged to contact the Department's Office of Consumer Services for complaints or concerns regarding their utility Contact Us | Department of Public Service.

New York State Police

The New York State Police is closely monitoring the forecast and coordinating with the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, the Department of Transportation, the Thruway Authority, DEC, Parks, and our local partners as the expected weather moves into the state. Troopers and specialized units are ready and standing by across all regions to respond to any weather-related emergencies, assist motorists, and support local communities if conditions deteriorate.

Public safety is our priority, and we will continue to adjust staffing and resources as needed to protect the public throughout this weather event. In an emergency, call 911.

Department of Environmental Conservation

The Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Emergency Management staff, Environmental Conservation Police Officers, Forest Rangers, and regional staff remain on alert and continue to monitor weather forecasts. Working with partner agencies, DEC is prepared to coordinate resource deployment of all available assets, including first responders, to targeted areas in preparation for potential impacts due to high winds, heavy rainfall, and snow and ice.

DEC reminds those responsible for the removal and disposal of snow to follow best management practices to help prevent flooding and reduce the potential for pollutants like salt, sand, oils, trash, and other debris from affecting water quality. Disposal of snow in local creeks and streams can create ice dams, which may cause flooding. Public and private snow removal operators should be aware of these safety issues during and after winter storms. Additional information is available at Division of Water Technical and Operational Guidance Series: Snow Disposal.

Hiking Safety

Unpredictable winter weather and storms in the Adirondacks, Catskills, and other backcountry areas can create unexpectedly hazardous conditions. Visitors should be prepared with proper clothing and equipment for snow, ice, and cold to ensure a safe winter experience. Snow depths range greatly throughout the Adirondacks, with the deepest snow at higher elevations in the High Peaks region and other mountains over 3,000 feet. Lower elevation trails have mixed conditions of snow, ice, and slush including many trails in the Catskill Mountains where the potential for icy trail conditions exist.

Backcountry visitors should Hike Smart and follow proper safety guidelines. Plan trips accordingly. In an emergency, call 9-1-1. To request Forest Ranger assistance, call 1-833-NYS-RANGERS. While some waterways may appear frozen, DEC advises outdoor enthusiasts to review ice safety guidelines before heading out.

Hikers are advised to temporarily avoid all high-elevation trails, as well as trails that cross rivers and streams during major storm events. Hikers are encouraged to check DEC's webpages for updates on trail conditions, seasonal road closures, and general recreation information.

Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

New York State Park Police and park personnel are on alert and closely monitoring weather conditions and impacts. Response equipment is being fueled, tested and prepared for storm response use. Five sawyer crews are on standby for deployment for potential clearing of downed trees and branches. Park visitors should visit parks.ny.gov, check the free NY State Parks Explorer mobile app or call their local park office for the latest updates regarding park hours, openings and closings.

Port Authority of New York and New Jersey

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is monitoring weather forecasts to ensure safe travel conditions at its six vehicular crossings. During inclement weather or strong winds, trucks or tractor-trailers and motorcycles may be restricted from bridges or speed limits may be reduced. Shared-use paths may also be closed in the event of high winds or low visibility. Motorists, pedestrians or bicyclists who use the Port Authority's crossings are strongly encouraged to sign up for email alerts where information on such possible restrictions are shared in real time. Air travelers should check their flight status with their airline before leaving for the airport, or check the Federal Aviation Administration website for any weather-related FAA safety programs that may affect flight operations at their departure or arrival airports.

Winter Driving Safety Tips

- *Monitor the forecast for your local area and areas you may be travelling to.*
- *Avoid unnecessary travel.*
- *If you must travel, make sure your car is stocked with survival gear like blankets, a shovel, flashlight and extra batteries, extra warm clothing, set of tire chains, battery booster cables, quick energy foods and brightly colored cloth to use as a distress flag.*
- *If you have a cellphone or other communications device such as a two-way radio available for your use, keep the battery charged and keep it with*

you whenever traveling. If you should become stranded, you will be able to call for help, advising rescuers of your location.

- *The leading cause of death and injuries during winter storms is transportation accidents. Before getting behind the wheel, make sure that your vehicle is clear of ice and snow; good vision is key to good driving. Plan your stops and keep more distance between cars. Be extra alert and remember that snowdrifts can hide smaller children. Always match your speed to the road and weather conditions.*
- *It is important for motorists on all roads to note that snowplows travel at speeds up to 35 mph, which in many cases is lower than the posted speed limit.*
- *Oftentimes on interstate highways, snowplows will operate side by side, to safely clear several lanes at one time.*
- *Motorists and pedestrians should also keep in mind that snowplow drivers have limited lines of sight, and the size and weight of snowplows can make it very difficult to maneuver and stop quickly. Snow blowing from behind the plow can severely reduce visibility or cause whiteout conditions.*
- *Motorists should not attempt to pass snowplows or follow too closely. The safest place for motorists to drive is well behind the snowplows where the roadway is clear and salted. Never attempt to pass a snowplow while it's operating.*

Power Outage Safety Tips

- *Do not go near or touch fallen or sagging power lines: treat all wires as live and dangerous. Keep children and pets away from fallen electric wires. Never touch any lines or any items that are in contact with lines.*
- *Check with your utility to determine area repair schedules.*
- *Turn off or unplug lights and appliances to prevent a circuit overload when service is restored; leave one light on to indicate when power has been restored.*
- *If heat goes out during a storm, keep warm by closing off rooms you do not need.*

To Report an Electric Outage, Call:

Central Hudson: Electric: 800-527-2714 or Gas: 800-942-8274

Con Ed: Electric: 800-752-6633 or Gas: 800-752-6633

Corning Gas: 800-834-2134

Liberty Utilities (St. Lawrence Gas) Corp.: 800-673- 3301

National Fuel Gas: 1-800-444-3130

National Grid:

- *Electric: 800-867-5222*
- *Long Island (gas): 1-800-490-0045*
- *Metro NYC (gas): 1-718-643-4050*
- *Upstate (gas): 1-800-892-2345*

NYSEG: Electric: 800-572-1131 or Gas: 800-572-1121

O&R: Electric: 877-434-4100 or Gas: 800-533-5325

PSEG-LI: 800-490-0075

RG&E: Electric: 800-743-1701 or Gas: 800-743-1702

For more safety tips, go to www.dhses.ny.gov/safety.

Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency

New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services
1220 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12226
518-242-5000

[Homeland Security and Emergency Services | Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services](#)

[New York State Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Services | Albany NY | Facebook](#)

[NYS Div. of Homeland Security & Emergency Services \(@NYSDHSES\) / X](#)
[NYS DHSES - YouTube](#)

American Red Cross

American Red Cross Greater New York Region
520 West 49th Street
New York, NY 10019
877-733-2767

[Greater New York Region | American Red Cross](#)

[American Red Cross in Greater New York | New York NY | Facebook](#)

[American Red Cross Greater NY \(@redcrossny\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)

Please see the following link for the most updated information on available shelters: [Disaster Shelters | Find Shelters | American Red Cross](#)

Open Shelters: Please note that there are no current shelters open.

Department of Transportation

New York State Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12232
518-457-6195

[NYSDOT Home](#)

[New York State Department of Transportation | Albany NY | Facebook](#)

[NYSDOT \(@NYSDOT\) / X](#)

[511NY| New York Traffic | Commuter Information | Road Conditions](#)

United Way/211 Information and Referrals Lines

These information and referral lines may know of additional resources currently providing assistance, such as food pantries, clothing closets, emergency shelters, and agencies offering financial assistance. Please dial 2-1-1 and provide your zip code and demographic information in order to receive referrals. Information can also be obtained at [Call 211 for Essential Community Services | United Way 211](#).
[211 New York State](#)

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

(800) 621-3362

[FEMA.gov](#)

Please visit the website and click on “*Disaster Declarations*”. If a disaster is declared, please call to apply for assistance by phone, or visit: [Individual Assistance | FEMA.gov](#) to apply online.

DisasterAssistance.gov

[Home | disasterassistance.gov](#)

Offers information about local resources for disasters, including: FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs), Red Cross, food, shelter, state emergency management agencies, and hospital locators.

To determine if individual disaster assistance is available through FEMA, please visit the website and enter the address.

To locate your local state emergency management agency for disaster information and updates, please visit: [Search Your Location | FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov)

American Red Cross National

(800) 733-2767

[American Red Cross | Help Those Affected by Disasters](https://www.redcross.org)

National Weather Service

Weather alerts by state are available at: [Active Alerts \(weather.gov\)](https://www.weather.gov).

The Weather Channel

Local forecasts and severe weather. Please call or visit the website to locate your local chapter and open shelters.

[National and Local Weather Radar, Daily Forecast, Hurricane and information from The Weather Channel and weather.com.](https://www.weather.com)

Safe Travel USA

[SafeTravelUSA](https://www.saftravelusa.com)

National Traffic And Road Closure Information

[National Traffic and Road Closure Information | Federal Highway Administration \(dot.gov\)](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov)

Free Help Line

Optum, a leading health and behavioral health services company, is offering a free emotional-support help line.

The toll-free number, 866-447-3573, will be open Monday-Friday, 8am-8pm CST. The service is free of charge and open to anyone. Specially trained Optum mental health specialists help people manage their stress and anxiety so they can continue to address their everyday needs. Callers may also receive referrals to community resources to help them with specific concerns, including financial and legal matters.

Along with the toll-free help line, emotional-support resources and information are available online at <https://www.liveandworkwell.com>.