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Motorists Advised to STAY AT HOME!

JANUARY 05TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

Motorists Advised to STAY AT HOME!

*Submitted by
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

Missouri - High winds and blowing snow across much of the state means motorists are advised to stay home and avoid travel until this storm ends.

The Missouri Department of Transportation has issued a "no travel advisory" for the duration of this storm, which is expected to continue through the day on Sunday, Jan. 5 and through the night.

"For your safety and the safety of our crews, we ask everyone to avoid travel once this storm begins, unless it is an emergency," said Ed Hassinger, MoDOT Chief Engineer. "Strong winds are blowing the snow around, and it's creating a whiteout effect that makes it very difficult to see and makes travel extremely hazardous."

The snowfall, coupled with 35-40 mph wind gusts, can create drifts that will seriously challenge even four-wheel drive vehicles.

"With the snow, high winds, and extreme cold, it's going to be a challenge for MoDOT to clear our state routes," said Hassinger. "If there are no other vehicles on the roadways, we have a much better chance of making progress so traffic can get moving again."

When temperatures dip this low, getting stranded on the side of the road can be very

dangerous. Before you head out, equip your vehicle with an emergency kit and let a friend or family member know when and where you're traveling. If you do become stranded, stay with your vehicle and call 911. Be aware that emergency responders may have difficulty reaching you.

One of the best ways to prepare for winter travel is to check MoDOT's Traveler Information Map, located at www.modot.org. The map offers real-time views of road conditions for Missouri's interstates and major highways.

For smartphone and tablet users, MoDOT's Traveler Information App brings the same information to your mobile devices. Users can select road condition and work zone options from the map's legend, and view the same cameras and message boards found on desktop version of the map. The app is available for free at the iPhone App Store and Android Marketplace.

Travelers can also pick up the phone and call MoDOT's toll-free customer service center at 888-ASK-MODOT (888-275-6636). Customer service representatives are available to give road conditions updates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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Amtrak Missouri River Runner Decreases Fares

JANUARY 03RD 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

Amtrak Missouri River Runner Decreases Fares

*Submitted by
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

Missouri - The weather outside might get frightful, but this winter, savings on Amtrak travel are delightful. Missouri River Runner passengers can save 20 percent on adult fares for travel January 2 through March 31.

Book your seat using discount code V539 effective January 1, 2014. Reservations are required at least one day in advance of travel on the route between Kansas City and St. Louis, which includes stops at Kirkwood, Washington, Hermann, Jefferson City, Sedalia, Warrensburg, Lee's Summit and Independence.

Complete your plans now for the lowest fares. Savings are possible by booking through the "Deals" tab at Amtrak.com or by calling 800-USA-RAIL. You can also purchase tickets using Amtrak eTicketing and simply print your boarding documents from any printer or present them on board electronically via your smartphone.

Terms and conditions vary. Some blackout dates and other applicable restrictions apply, including advance reservation and purchase requirements, which are displayed on Amtrak.com. The offer is valid for coach seats and is dependent upon availability.

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Don't Become a New Year's Eve Statistic

DECEMBER 31ST 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

Don't Become a New Year's Eve Statistic

*Submitted by
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

Missouri - There are no excuses for driving drunk. The consequences are known: fines, jail time or even death.

As you prepare for your New Year's Eve, top your list with a designated driver. The Missouri Department of Transportation wants to remind those who plan to drink alcohol to designate a sober driver or call a cab.

Statewide, law enforcement is on the lookout for impaired drivers. Many municipalities will be shoring up their patrols with a focus on intoxicated drivers.

"Don't become a New Year's Eve statistic," said Dave Nichols, MoDOT director. "Last year, 12 people were killed and 63 were seriously injured in Missouri traffic crashes over the New Year's holiday."

Nichols noted that four of the fatalities and 11 of the serious injuries involved a substance-impaired driver.

"We are making a special effort to reach motorists with reminders to plan ahead if they're

going to drink tonight," Nichols said. "This is a time of celebration, but it's also a time to use forethought and common sense."

Light snow is also forecasted for many parts of the state over the next 24 hours, adding to the need for caution when operating a vehicle.

LAST UPDATED ON DECEMBER 31ST 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

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SANTA Has Been Spotted!

DECEMBER 23RD 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

SANTA Has Been Spotted!

*Written by
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

Dexter, Missouri – Santa has been spotted by NORAD! Did you know that children all over the United States can track Santa Clause? The North American

Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) is set to start tracking St. Nick's travels tonight.

You can head over to **NoradSanta.org** to see the countdown clock ticking down to that final hour. NORAD has been tracking Santa via its high-tech instruments since 1955 with its festive annual program designed to show children how the red-suited, jolly fellow makes his way to chimneys all over the world.

Children can explore the North Pole and see Santa's Village. There are games, movies and music to keep the children entertained for hours as they wait for Santa.

How did all this get started? Go to the Secret Santa Files and learn how Sears Roebuck & Co. misprinted a telephone number for children to call Santa. The phone number put kids through to the CONAD Commander-in-Chief's operations "hotline". OOPS! Not to disappoint all the children, the Director had his staff check the radar for Santa and so it became tradition. CONAD was later renamed to NORAD.

Satellites help track Rudolph's red nose with no problem. The satellites are only 22,300 miles above the earth each with infrared sensors searching for heat. Rudolph's red nose sure puts off some heat with that GLOW!

NORAD intelligence even posts videos almost every hour on Christmas Eve of Santa making his way around the world. There is even specific technical data about Santa's sleight. Did you know it is 75 candy canes long and 40 candy canes wide? Or that the maximum speed is faster than starlight? Or that the fuel consists of hay, oats and carrots to keep his nine reindeer in tiptop shape? There is so much to learn at **NoradSanta.org**. Go check it out this holiday season.

HO! HO! HO! Merry Christmas to all!

LAST UPDATED ON DECEMBER 23RD 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Flash Flood Warning for Stoddard County

DECEMBER 21ST 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

Flash Flood Warning for Stoddard County

*Submitted by
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

Stoddard County, Missouri - Updated Dec 21, 2013, 11:45am CST

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN PADUCAH HAS ISSUED A FLASH FLOOD WARNING FOR... BOLLINGER COUNTY IN SOUTHEAST MISSOURI... BUTLER COUNTY IN SOUTHEAST MISSOURI... CAPE GIRARDEAU COUNTY IN SOUTHEAST MISSOURI... CARTER COUNTY IN SOUTHEAST MISSOURI... MISSISSIPPI COUNTY IN SOUTHEAST MISSOURI... NEW MADRID COUNTY IN SOUTHEAST MISSOURI... PERRY COUNTY IN SOUTHEAST MISSOURI... RIPLEY COUNTY IN SOUTHEAST MISSOURI... SCOTT COUNTY IN SOUTHEAST MISSOURI... STODDARD COUNTY IN SOUTHEAST MISSOURI... WAYNE COUNTY IN SOUTHEAST MISSOURI...

* UNTIL 100 PM CST.

* AT 656 AM CST... HEAVY RAINFALL CONTINUED TO TRACK ACROSS MUCH OF SOUTHEAST MISSOURI REPORTS OF CREEKS, DITCHES AND SMALL RIVERS APPROACHING BANKFULL OR OUT OF BANKS. SEVERAL REPORTS OF 3 TO NEARLY 4 INCHES OF RAINFALL ACCUMULATIONS HAVE BEEN

RECEIVED.

* LOCATIONS IN THE WARNED AREA INCLUDE... GREENVILLE... SAM A. BAKER STATE PARK... ADVANCE... PIEDMONT... MARBLE HILL... ORAN... BOLLINGER MILL STATE HISTORIC SITE... CHAFFEE... VAN BUREN... BENTON... JACKSON... SCOTT CITY... CAPE GIRARDEAU... TRAIL OF TEARS STATE PARK... PERRYVILLE... SHOOK... LODI... GRASSY... CASCADE AND BELL CITY.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

ADDITIONAL RAINFALL AMOUNTS OF 2 TO 3 INCHES ARE POSSIBLE IN THE WARNED AREA THROUGH THE MORNING HOURS.

EXCESSIVE RUNOFF FROM HEAVY RAINFALL WILL CAUSE FLOODING OF SMALL CREEKS AND STREAMS... HIGHWAYS AND UNDERPASSES. ADDITIONALLY... COUNTRY ROADS AND FARMLANDS ALONG THE BANKS OF CREEKS... STREAMS AND OTHER LOW LYING AREAS ARE SUBJECT TO FLOODING.

DO NOT DRIVE YOUR VEHICLE INTO AREAS WHERE THE WATER COVERS THE ROADWAY. THE WATER DEPTH MAY BE TOO GREAT TO ALLOW YOUR CAR TO CROSS SAFELY. MOVE TO HIGHER GROUND.

MOST FLOOD DEATHS OCCUR IN AUTOMOBILES. NEVER DRIVE YOUR VEHICLE INTO AREAS WHERE THE WATER COVERS THE ROADWAY. FLOOD WATERS ARE USUALLY DEEPER THAN THEY APPEAR. JUST ONE FOOT OF FLOWING WATER IS POWERFUL ENOUGH TO SWEEP VEHICLES OFF THE ROAD. WHEN ENCOUNTERING FLOODED ROADS MAKE THE SMART CHOICE... TURN AROUND... DONT DROWN.

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