

NORTHERN VIRGINIA SNOW BRIEFING

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

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October 31, 2024

Northern Virginia District Background

Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William, and Arlington*

** Arlington maintains own network*

Population: 2.5 million

Commuter lots: 24

Bridges/large culverts: 2,271

Traffic signals: 1,516

VDOT employees: 900



Lane Miles

Total lane miles: 14,297

- **Interstate: 840**
- **Primary: 1,711**
- **Secondary: 11,677**
- **Unpaved: 282**
- **Frontage: 69**
- **Subdivision: 17,384**



Maintenance Areas

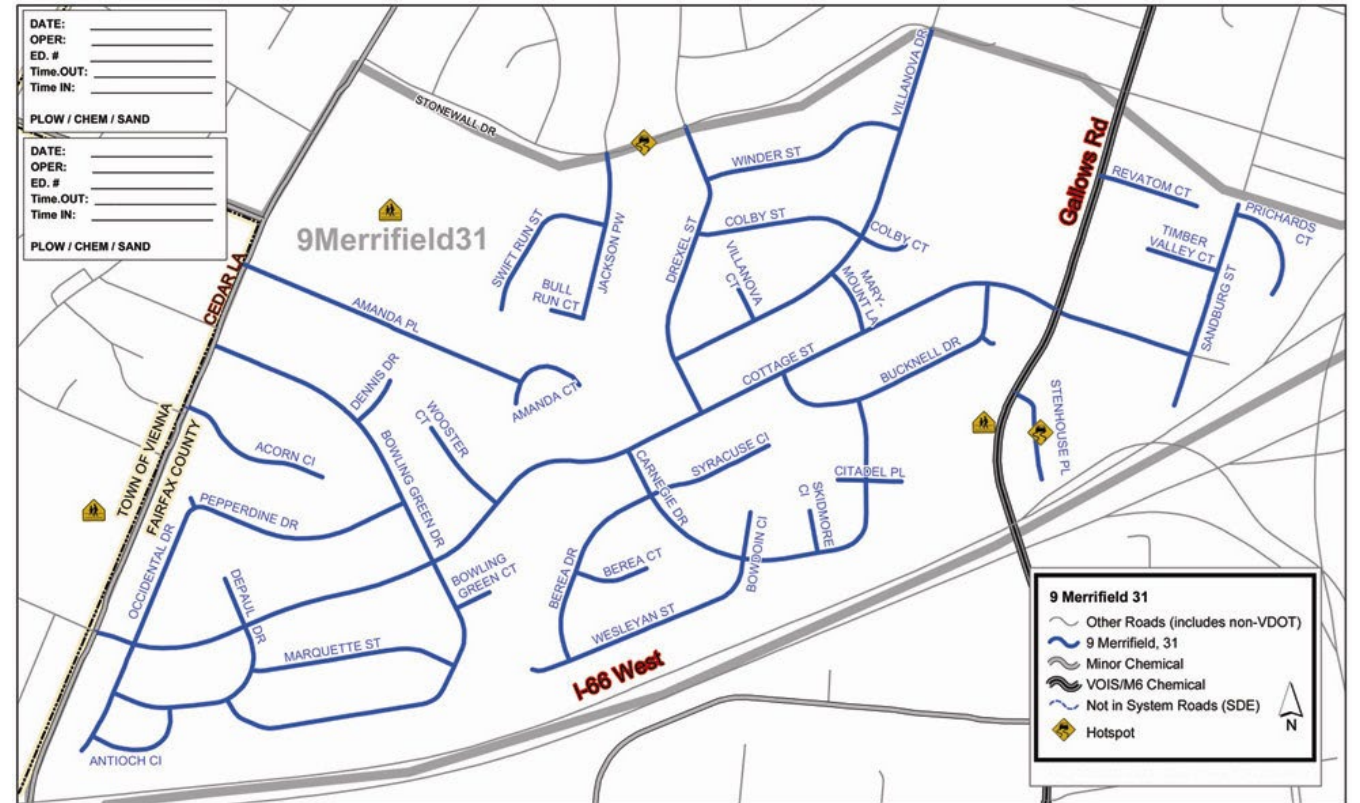
18 maintenance area headquarters

- **Arlington: 1**
- **Fairfax: 9**
- **Loudoun: 4**
- **Prince William: 4**



Snow Maps

NOVA District is divided into **647 snow maps** that includes interstates, primary, and secondary roads.



Planning, Preparation, and Training

- **Review forecast** with National Weather Service and Iteris
- **Mobilization plan** determined, including if incident command will be activated
- **Message is shared with residencies**, including counties and interstates



Resources

Materials capacity:

- Salt: 120,000 tons
- Sand: 25,000 tons
- Brine: 250,000 gallons

Pieces of equipment:

- 3,500 (*mostly contracted*)



Mobilization

- **Mobilization level is determined based on the severity of the storm**
- **Designated levels 1 through 5 (or Skeleton Crews)**
- **Level 1 is a minor storm**
- **Level 5 is a significant storm with 6”+ snow forecast**
- **Levels assigned for each event help determine how many resources are deployed**

Pretreatment

- **Most effective during first hour of winter weather event**
- **Reduces bonding to asphalt and concrete surfaces**
- **Needs dry conditions so that the brine doesn't wash away or dilute**



Pretreatment

If the storm is expected to start as all snow, and the temperatures are within the correct range (>20F), we may perform a partial or full pretreatment of all bridges, overpasses, elevated surfaces, primary and/or secondary roads.



Additional Focus

- Ensuring the roadways are as safe as possible
- Shoulders, ramps, turn lanes, and intersections
- 12,000 park and ride spaces



Additional Priorities

Sidewalks

- Crews asked to be mindful of limited space to pile snow
- Special care is given near schools/emergency facilities
- Residents/businesses are asked to clear near their property
- Check with localities for ordinances



VDEQ Salt Management Strategy (SaMS)

- **Since January 2018, VDOT has participated in the Salt Management Strategy (SaMS) development coordinated by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ)**
- **Stakeholders working to balance public safety and impacts of salt use**
- **Aims to raise awareness of salt use; share how individuals, businesses, and organizations can participate; and provide voluntary guidance for potential monitoring and research**
- **SaMS Tool kit finalized March 2021- Details:
<https://www.novaregion.org/1399/Northern-Virginia-Salt-Management-Strate>**

NORTHERN VIRGINIA DISTRICT

WINTER WEATHER FACTS 2024-25



MOBILIZATION



We monitor the forecast closely and mobilize crews and resources. Trucks report, load, and deploy.

If 2"+ of snow is forecast, residents may see trucks staged along roadways.

18 MAINTENANCE AREA HEADQUARTERS

Arlington: 1
Fairfax: 9
Loudoun: 4
Prince William: 4



25 Salt domes and sheds

Our largest dome, at I-495 and Van Dorn Street in Alexandria, holds **33,000 tons** of salt.

PRETREATMENT



- Reduces bonding to asphalt and concrete
- Most effective during first hour of storm

- Performed if pavement temps are above 20° F and weather won't begin as rain

Depending upon the storm and the window of time, we may perform a partial or full pretreatment of bridges, overpasses, elevated surfaces, primary and/or secondary roads.

LANE MILES TO PLOW:



14,297

Interstate: 840
Primary: 1,711
Secondary: 11,677
(Includes 17,384 subdivision streets)

Crews work interstates, major roads, and main subdivision roads in priority order.

MATERIALS CAPACITY



BRINE	SALT	SAND
250,000 GALLONS	120,000 TONS	25,000 TONS

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Did you know?



Brine is a mix of 23% salt and 77% water. It is sprayed as a liquid that dries to create white "brine lines" on the pavement.

NORTHERN VIRGINIA DISTRICT | **VDOT**




WHAT DOES "PASSABLE" MEAN?



- In neighborhoods, an 8'-to-10' path for emergency vehicle access.
- Drivable with extreme caution, but is snow-packed and not curb-to-curb or to bare pavement.
- Crews will sand hills, curves and intersections to help with traction.

WHO CLEARS THE SIDEWALKS?



While we do not typically clear sidewalks, crews are asked to be mindful, especially near schools. There is often limited room to pile snow in significant storms to make roads passable.

Residents and businesses are asked to clear near their properties. Check with your locality for ordinances.

DOs

- Monitor weather closely, as forecasts can improve or worsen quickly.
- Adjust commutes, telework, or avoid driving during a storm and after until road conditions improve.
- Park in driveways or on the same side of the street.
- Wait to shovel driveways until plows have come, as they will push some snow back.
- Have enough gas, wiper fluid, proper tires, medication, and an emergency car kit.
- Be patient: crews need time and room to work.

DON'Ts

- Pass or get in between a plow or brine truck.
- Shovel snow to the left of your driveway.
- Dress children in heavy coats when they're secured in a car seat.
- Speed or follow other vehicles too closely.

X.COM (FORMERLY TWITTER.COM)
Follow @vadotnova for the latest news, updates, photos, and information.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION
See vdot.virginia.gov/snow for updates, FAQs, and other resources.

511 VIRGINIA
Check traffic conditions before you travel at 511virginia.org.

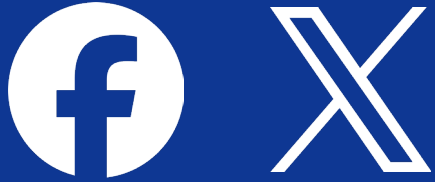
VDOT PLOWS
Visit plows.vdot.virginia.gov for plow status and locations once 2" of snow has accumulated.

CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTER
Report road hazards at 800-FOR-ROAD (367-7623) or my.vdot.virginia.gov.

STAY INFORMED



Stay Informed and Connected



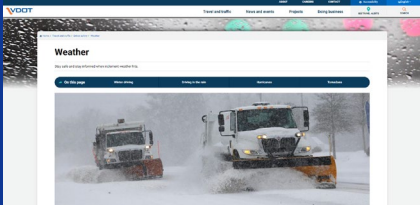
@vadotnova

Frequent updates on social media



511Virginia.org

For road conditions and traffic cameras



<https://vdot.virginia.gov/snow>

Find all resources in one place



plows.vdot.virginia.gov

Location of plows once 2" has accumulated

Questions?





Virginia Department of Transportation