

Information for holiday and winter travel plans

The Kansas Department of Transportation would like to remind travelers to use the free traveler information services it provides to prepare for their holiday/winter travels. With weather updates provided every 15 minutes, Kansas 511 can be a resource to help travelers learn about winter driving conditions.

KanDrive. www.kandrive.org, KDOT's traveler information gateway for Kansas and surrounding states, provides essential information you need to plan your trip. KanDrive features include camera images, motion camera views, an interactive 511 map of Kansas roads, road conditions and work zones and links to helpful transportation resources, such as Kansas Turnpike information, Kansas Byways, weather information and metro traffic information. Much of the same information can be accessed by calling 5-1-1 from anywhere in Kansas.

Camera snapshots of the roadway are updated every few minutes from closed-circuit cameras installed along I-70

and other highways. A **camera tour** is provided so travelers can select and see all camera images on a specified highway.

Motion camera links are also provided for many cameras along I-70 between Goodland and Auburn Road west of Topeka. These can be accessed by clicking on the camera icon and then clicking on the "motion camera" link (if provided on that camera) beneath the lower right corner of the camera view. Still shots will be updated every two seconds.

Electronic sign message views show construction, accident and safety messages currently being displayed.

Metro Traffic Management Center websites (Kansas City and Wichita) - Traffic Management Centers in Kansas City (KC Scout) and Wichita (WICHway), use up-to-the minute information to provide travel speeds and camera views on select routes, posted messages on electronic signs and other helpful information for drivers. KanDrive provides links to KC Scout (www.kcscout.org) and

WICHway (wichway.org), the new Wichita metro website. A new link at the top of the 511 Map page, "Metro Traffic Sites" now provides drop down links to metro traffic information for both of these sites.

RSS feeds and GeoRSS feeds to the 511 map page (<http://511.ksdot.org>).

KDOT also encourages travelers to use other free traveler information services to assist them in trip planning or in staying informed as they travel:

- The **511 Mobile** site at <http://511mm.ksdot.org> provides map, camera and electronic message sign views, road conditions, work zone and event information and links to weather. The site is accessible from multiple devices, including iPhones, Droids and Windows mobile devices, Version 6.0 and higher. Any devices not compatible with the new application will be able to access text information only for road conditions and work zones.
- 511 Phone** - From any phone anytime, travelers may call

5-1-1 from anywhere in Kansas or 1-866-511-KDOT (5368) from anywhere in the U.S. to get route-specific road conditions, work zone information, including detours and closed roads, and travel-related weather information to plan their trips or for updates as they travel.

Additional content and features will be coming soon, with more information coming when they are available.

It's also important to remember safe winter driving skills such as reducing speed for conditions and allowing extra time to travel. Turn off cruise control. Increase the distance between your vehicle and the vehicle ahead of you. Accelerate and brake gently to reduce the chance of losing control of your vehicle. Don't follow snow removal equipment too closely.

For everyone's safety, drivers should buckle up, not drink and drive, safely secure children in safety seats and avoid distractions such as talking or texting on their cell phone.

Online reporting for school funding inefficiencies

Kansans who interact with the state's K-12 educational system and have examples of inefficiencies that they have witnessed or experienced now can go online to share their firsthand experiences with the Governor's School Efficiency Task Force. The task force launched an online portal Wednesday where students, parents, involved citizens, teachers and administrators can submit information anonymously.

Recently, Governor Sam Brownback announced the formation of the task force to examine school spending and to develop guidelines on how to get more funding into the classroom where teachers teach and students learn. As reported to the Kansas Department of Education by the school districts, only 54 percent of total funding goes into the classroom and for instruction.

"While task force members are researching and analyzing where inefficiencies are occurring in our educational system, we also want to hear directly from Kansans who have their own ideas and suggestions on how to make our schools more efficient. We hope to hear from a lot of Kansans who take a few minutes to go online and share their thoughts with us," Task Force Chairman Ken Willard

said. Kansans can submit their suggestions at <https://governor.ks.gov/efficiency>.

Willard also announced the group's next meeting on November 9th focused on spending decisions made at the district level. He said the task force received a report from a representative of the Kansas Association of School Boards Efficiency Task Force and presentations from other district level education officials. Presenters were asked to identify best practices for reductions in administrative overhead and shed light on policies that limit their efforts to spend taxpayer money as efficiently as possible.

Governor Brownback said it was important for the task force to have a clear understanding of how state decisions impact local decisions.

"Inefficient spending impacts Kansas taxpayers at every level, from the State General Fund to local property taxes. The state has increased total spending on education by almost \$1 billion since 2000. Many school districts have raised taxes on local property owners during that same time period. Moving forward, we owe it to Kansas taxpayers to ensure those resources are used as efficiently and effectively as possible," Brownback said.

First flu case of the season reported

The Kansas Health and Environmental Laboratories (KHEL) has confirmed influenza in a specimen from an adult in south central Kansas on Oct. 31. This is the first laboratory-confirmed influenza case in Kansas for the 2012-2013 flu season.

Health officials are reminding Kansans that it's not too late to get vaccinated against influenza. Influenza vaccine is recommended for nearly everyone six months of age and older to reduce the risk of becoming ill with the flu and reduce the risk of spreading the flu to others. This is especially important for anyone at high risk of complications, and for anyone who is caring for, or in regular contact with, an infant less than six months of age. Babies this age are too young to be vaccinated and are more vulnerable to the complications from influenza.

Symptoms of influenza include fever, dry cough, extreme tiredness and muscle aches.

Complications can include pneumonia, ear and sinus infections, and dehydration; influenza may also worsen other chronic conditions.

"Flu has arrived once again in the state. While there is little flu activity right now, flu normally rises during the holidays before peaking around February. Influenza can continue to circulate through spring, and the flu can be unpredictable," said Robert Moser, M.D., KDHE Secretary and State Health Officer. "There is still time for everyone to get a flu vaccination to protect themselves, their loved ones and the community."

One of several ways KDHE tracks influenza is by monitoring the percentage of patients seeking healthcare in outpatient "sentinel" clinics who exhibit influenza-like illness (ILI), in a system known as ILINet. During the 2011-2012 influenza

season, this rate peaked at 3.4 percent the week ending March 10; this is the latest peak of an influenza season in Kansas since surveillance began in 1995. The typical peak is January to February. KDHE also closely monitors influenza-related deaths. During the 2011-2012 influenza season, influenza and pneumonia, a common complication of influenza, contributed to or directly caused more than 1,300 deaths among Kansas residents, and was the eighth leading underlying cause of death in 2011.

Additional ways to avoid spreading influenza include covering coughs and sneezes, washing your hands and staying home when sick.

For information on receiving the influenza vaccine, please contact your health care provider or the local health department. Visit www.kdheks.gov/flu for influenza facts.

Sudoku Puzzle #2732-M

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Medium

Plan first meeting of Beginning Farmers Coalition

Beginning and aspiring farmers and ranchers are invited to attend the first meeting of the Kansas Beginning Farmers Coalition (KBFC) on Nov. 30 and Dec. 1 in Topeka.

"We didn't want to limit the reach or scope of the organization and its' efforts. A beginning farmer could be someone in their teens or someone who is retiring/transitioning from a different career," Nick Levendofsky, Special Projects Coordinator for KFU, said. "We look forward to working with all ages and backgrounds through KBFC."

KBFC will hold its first meeting in conjunction with Kansas Farmers Union's annual convention at the Topeka Ramada. On Friday, Nov. 30 at 2 p.m., the group will discuss the mission and definition of KBFC and hear from other beginning farmers in Kansas.

On Saturday, Dec. 1 the group will brainstorm and discuss challenges young and beginning farmers and ranchers face in Kansas. That evening, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. KBFC will host a Social Supper at Blue Planet Cafe at 110 SE 8th in Downtown Topeka for \$15 a person.

KBFC's mission is to encourage, engage, and empower beginning farmers in Kansas. The Coalition is being organized to provide education opportunities and advocate for beginning farmers and ranchers in Kansas.

"We want all beginning farmers to give us a chance to make their

choice to pursue farming easier and less painful than figuring it all out by themselves," Mary Howell, KFU Membership Specialist, said. "We also want to provide support to the young or new person that could be going back to the conventional family farm. Those beginning farmers need a support network also. They sometimes need to

have an outside source to talk to when Dad won't listen to ANY new ideas for the farm that has always been done in a certain way. I know...I have been there."

The group is still in the beginning stages and will use this meeting to find out what services KBFC can provide to interested farmers and ranchers.

For more information and to register for the event, visit kansasfarmersunion.org or call 620-241-6630. The registration deadline for meals is Nov. 26. For more information on the Coalition, contact Nick Levendofsky at 785-527-0941 or kfu.nick@gmail.com.



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Coffee Klatsch

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American Profile Hometown Content 11/18/2012

ACROSS

- Hotfooted it
- Drink with a burger and fries
- Catcher's posture
- "Take one"
- Hertz rival
- The silent Marx
- Molecule part
- Dirty campaigner
- Carpenter's groove
- Mahmoud Abbas's org.
- Main line
- Winning candidate
- Kofi Annan
- Part of Roy G. Biv
- "Maria"
- Zero-star fare
- Le Sage's "Gil"
- Bad day for Caesar
- Have a tab
- Memorable Jackie Gleason character
- Pub serving
- An army NCO
- Hammer end
- Anjou relative
- Clamp shape
- Poseidon's realm
- Bator, Mongolia
- Less lenient
- Idolizer
- Na Na
- Gun barrel diameter
- Bit of Web programming
- Abba of Israel
- NY Yankees and Chi. White Sox
- Garb for a judge
- Designer Schiaparelli
- Taylor of "The Nanny"
- "Zounds!"

DOWN

- What elms provide
- Flower part
- Chip away at
- FDR, but not TR
- Pitched a tent
- Immature seed
- Italian island resort
- Braying beast
- Gambler's loss, figuratively
- Airline to down under
- Hankering
- Takeoff artist
- British sympathizer of 1776
- Most recent
- New Ager John
- Turn aside
- "Waste not, want not," e.g.
- Prospector's find
- "The Virginian" author Wister
- capita income
- String tie
- Cask dregs
- "Peer Gynt" playwright
- Sharp left from Ali
- Steep slope
- Blunted blade
- Weak brew
- Arrow poison
- Declared as fact
- Car shopper's option
- Biblical queendom
- Duke or earl
- Rub out
- Kidney-related
- Not quite shut
- Chip's chipmunk chum
- Bakery fixture
- Plod along
- Post-opposite

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