

## NDOT Department of Highway Safety stresses safety this holiday season



*Navajo Division of Transportation heavy equipment operators began snow removal activities recently. Pictured here is a motor grader clearing Navajo Route 7, the main road to Sawmill, Ariz. on Dec. 15, 2012. Because of inclement weather conditions and the celebratory Christmas spirit so close to the holiday, the Department of Highway Safety warns all drivers to take extra precautions when traveling. (Photo by Rick Abasta)*

**T**he month of December marks the time of the holiday season when everything is in full swing and the first snowfalls are enjoyed around the Navajo Nation. It is also a time of festive celebration.

Among highway safety professionals, Dec. is known as “National Impaired Driving Awareness Month.”

President Barack Obama issued a national proclamation and said, “As Americans gather with friends and family to share in the holiday season, National Impaired Driving Prevention Month reminds us the importance of celebrating safely.

“Every year, accidents involving drunk, drugged, or distracted driving claim thou-

sands of lives, leaving families to face the heartbeat of losing a loved one. We stand with all those who have known the tragic consequences of drugged or drunk driving, and we rededicate ourselves to preventing it this Dec. and throughout the year,” President Obama added.

Also affecting our roadways is the inclement weather. While most enjoy the snowfall for the benefits of moisture, driving through inclement weather can be dangerous to individuals on our roadways.

Safety tips for this season include the three P’s of safe winter driving: Prepare for the trip, protect yourself, and prevent crashes on the road.

Motorists should maintain their vehicles, including

checking the battery, tire tread, and windshield wipers. Keep your windows clear by adding no-freeze fluid in your washer reservoir and checking your radiator’s antifreeze levels.

Additionally, motorists should keep a flashlight, jumper cables, shovel, snow, brush, ice scraper, blankets, and warning devices (like flares) in their vehicles. For longer trips, add food, water, medication, and cell phones.

Remember to add additional time to your travel. Check the weather and leave earlier to drive, if necessary. Familiarize yourself with map directions and be sure to let others know your route and arrival time.

Buckle up and use child safety seats properly. Slow down

and increase your distance between vehicles. Keep your eyes open for pedestrians walking the road and again, never use drugs or alcohol when driving.

This safety reminder is brought to you by the Navajo Division of Transportation Highway Safety Department. We remind the general public to be careful while traveling the roadways. Let’s make this a safe and happy holiday season.

Information:  
[www.navajodot.org](http://www.navajodot.org)