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## **Survey of 23 States Shows \$1 billion Spent, 8 Million Work Hours Logged and Six Million Tons of Salt Used to Battle Winter Weather**

WASHINGTON—According to a first of its kind “Winter Maintenance Operations Survey” conducted by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials 23 reporting states spent approximately \$1.131 billion from October 2014 to mid-April 2015 to pre-treat, plow roads or spread chemicals and other materials on roadways to keep them open and operating safely this winter season.

“The responsibilities of State Departments of Transportation go far beyond planning, designing, constructing and maintaining roadways and bridges,” said Bud Wright, AASHTO executive director. “When we think about funding transportation we need to consider the total amount needed to keep people and goods moving throughout the entire year. The 23 surveyed states spent more than a billion dollars and eight million work hours this winter season. That’s indicative of the amount of resources needed and the commitment and dedication displayed by state DOTs.”

Every winter, communities large and small, urban and rural rely on state DOTs to keep roadways open and people connected to emergency services, work, schools and businesses. This season was especially challenging for several state DOTs as reflected in the survey.

Massachusetts DOT reports that of the 31 winter storms it battled this season, two were among the worst winter storms on record. The Boston area received 110.6 inches of snowfall and the Worcester area received 119.7 inches. The state also recorded 43 consecutive days of temperatures below 40 degrees. MassDOT keeps a separate budget for snow and ice removal. As of March 21, 2015 MassDOT had spent \$153.7 million on winter operations. A majority of that total, \$98 million was spent to hire equipment and personnel. In addition to addressing its own roads, MassDOT also provided equipment and personnel to assist 29 cities and towns with snow and ice removal. 19 of those jurisdictions also received salt and other roadway deicing materials. MassDOT also supported the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency staging areas for out of state crews.

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) reports a 35 percent increase this season in the total average inches of snow over a 14 year average. Maryland (SHA) used \$108 million for winter operations, 32 percent of its annual maintenance budget. Connecticut spent \$45 million, 33 percent of its annual maintenance budget and New Hampshire spent \$46 million or 55 percent of its annual maintenance budget to battle what officials there said was the third worse winter season since 1970.

“Comparatively speaking—this was an extremely challenging winter season, “ said Rick Nelson coordinator of the AASHTO Snow and Ice Cooperative Program. “Multiple southern states were hit hard by ice storms and the eastern part of the U.S., especially New England, had their budgets squeezed by a concentration of snow storms and freezing temperatures. Not only were Eastern states pounded by record setting snowfall -- the winter storms kept coming, one after the other, compelling DOTs to keep plows on the road the entire season.”

The Winter Maintenance Operations survey found that state employees and contractors logged 8 million work hours this season and they used a fleet of more than 24,000 state and/or private contractor owned snow plows and trucks equipped for plowing. The state DOTs also estimate using approximately six million tons of salt during the winter season.

“When it comes to winter operations states are committed to doing what it takes to keep roadways open and safe,” said Nelson. “And it’s important to note that when you’ve got a massive fleet of more than 20,000 pieces of equipment on our roadways removing snow and ice there’s going to be wear and tear. The snow may have disappeared but State DOTs are left with leaner budgets and miles of potholes to repair.”

Indiana, Missouri, Montana, South Dakota, Utah, Washington State and Wyoming all reported having a mild winter season. Colorado, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan and Nebraska, reported an average winter season while eleven others states -- Arkansas, Connecticut, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Vermont -- described the season as “difficult to severe.” The 16 states reporting an average-to-difficult season are predicting increased demand for pothole repairs.

Maryland SHA has also experienced what it calls “a large increase” in potholes, spending \$600,000 on potholes repairs so far this year.

See the full data spreadsheet at [http://downloads.transportation.org/AASHTO\\_2014-2015WinterSurvey.xlsx](http://downloads.transportation.org/AASHTO_2014-2015WinterSurvey.xlsx).

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The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials represent State Departments of Transportation in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. AASHTO is a nonprofit, nonpartisan association serving as a catalyst for excellence in transportation. On Twitter: <http://twitter.com/aashtospeaks>.