



Fall is Here!

The leaves are changing color, the weather is getting cooler, and winter is right around the corner, and it is still important to stay informed and prepared for road closures, thunderstorms, early winter weather, and everything in between. Keep reading to find important information as well as see what we've been working on to keep our community prepared!



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**CONTACT
US NOW**



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Columbia, MO 65202

Be aware of road closures and delays

Road construction happens year-round but is especially important in this season. I-70 and US 63 are two of the most important roads in the county, and right now they are both under construction as part of the Interstate 70 improvement project. Here are a few things you should be aware of:

1. Construction causes congestion

In parts of I-70, the speed limit slows down to much lower than the 70-mph standard you are used to. This means a lot of people are slowing down, causing congestion. Plan to avoid peak travel times to minimize delays.



2. Weather makes it worse

Add a storm or winter weather on top of everything else that is happening, and you have a real recipe for delays or crashes. Check weather conditions before you leave the house and prepare accordingly.



3. Phones down, Eyes up

And, most importantly, leave the phone in your pocket. Being distracted can be dangerous for you, for others, and for road workers. To stay safe, leave the phone down and keep your eyes up.

Learn more and stay updated at:
<https://www.mo.gov/safety/transportation-safety/>



Winter Preparedness

Winter is right around the corner, and there are several things that you should do if you want to be ready for the cold season. From clothing to car to home, let's prepare you to be safe in the upcoming weather.

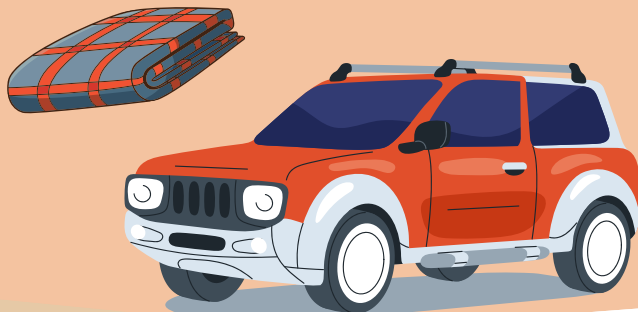
CLOTHES

Your clothes are your first line of defense against the cold. Layering is key, starting with a moisture-wicking base layer. The middle layer should provide insulation, and the outer layer must be waterproof to protect against sleet and snow. Keep extra essentials like gloves and a hat in both your car and home emergency kits.



CAR

A winter emergency kit is crucial for your car. It should contain a flashlight, shovel, and sand or cat litter for traction. Also, pack a first-aid kit, water, and warm blankets. Before winter, get your vehicle checked to ensure the battery and tires are ready for cold and icy conditions.



HOME

A power outage can be a major challenge during a winter storm. Your home emergency kit should have a three-day supply of water and non-perishable food. Include a hand-crank radio, flashlights, and extra batteries. Have a backup heat source too.



Community Spotlight



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On a project this impactful, the coordination and effort of the first responders is the backbone to the success of the project.

Eric Kopinski

MoDOT

Eric Kopinski, MoDOT Improve I-70 Program Director

What steps has MODOT taken to ensure safety for commuters?

Project inspectors and engineers monitor the work daily, making adjustments like adding signs or pavement markings, or even redesigning an area if needed. Lane closures and reduced speed limits are used only when necessary to protect workers and the public, and the most impactful work is scheduled for overnight when traffic is low. The project also avoids major weekend events like Mizzou football games.

What are challenges to that goal?

A primary challenge is the increase in traffic volume, speed, and distracted driving on I-70. With around 60,000 vehicles per day, there have been several near-misses with workers. MoDOT urges drivers to slow down and stay alert.

What are some preventative measures that are taken to mitigate the risk of severe crashes, bottlenecks, etc.?

MoDOT uses advanced outreach and signage to inform the public of upcoming changes. To combat unexpected issues like crashes, they use "smart work zones" with message boards that automatically adjust for slow traffic, which has been shown to reduce secondary crashes. The Traffic Management Centers also monitor I-70 24/7 to help clear unexpected delays quickly in coordination with first responders.

Is there anything else you want the community to know?

Columbia to Kingdom City is one of the largest projects in the history of MoDOT and Missouri. While the construction impacts can be frustrating, the long-term benefits will be significant. This project will be a game changer for improving the safety for the area and help with economic development. We encourage anyone who wants additional information about the project to visit the project website: <https://www.modot.org/improvei70/home>



Ready Festival



Ready Festival is one of our favorite events we host for the Boone County community, and this year was a great success. We were happy to welcome over 300 participants and collaborate with over 50 vendors who made it possible. The festival was a great way to engage with the community:

Boone County Ready

The event, Ready Festival, is named after our preparedness campaign, Boone County Ready. Boone County Ready aims to enhance community preparedness, foster collaboration, and build resilience by engaging our citizens in actively preparing for emergencies and disasters.



Tom S. Hurley Public Safety Service Award

Each year at Ready Festival we are honored present the Tom S. Hurley Public Safety Award. This award recognizes an individual, agency, or organization that embodies Tom's spirit and dedication to community service. This year we were honored to present this award to Helping Hands Southern Boone, an organization that exhibits dedication to its community through its helpfulness, initiative, altruism and humility.

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Ready Festival



Community Focus

Ready Festival is focused on engaging our community by creating an event that is not only informative but also enjoyable and accessible. We make an effort to be family and pet-friendly, and offered a wide range of attractions, activities, and other entertainment, ensuring that everyone can participate in the fun and learning.



Ready Festival is a highlight of the community's preparedness efforts, helping Boone County residents learn about resources and techniques to prepare for a wide range of emergencies. By continuing to host this favorite annual event, the Boone County Office of Emergency Management demonstrates its commitment to fostering a community where everyone is prepared for any things that comes their way.

Tabletop Exercises

One of the ways that we ensure we are ready for anything that can be thrown our way is through tabletop exercises with our partners. Some of these are required by state and federal regulation, and others are just to ensure that we are prepared to keep our community safe.

Columbia Regional Airport Annual TSA Tabletop Exercise

On August 25th, the Columbia Regional Airport (COU) hosted its annual TSA tabletop exercise. This event brought together airlines, first responders, airport public safety, the TSA, and other partners to discuss responses to scenarios like disruptive passengers and bomb threats. With COU's recent growth, the exercise was critical for updating plans and ensuring the safety and security of all travelers.

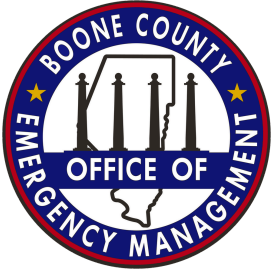


The Importance of Practice

The overarching goal of these exercises is to identify gaps and weaknesses in our emergency plans. By simulating disasters, we can pinpoint what we need to improve on. These drills also help our partners practice their skills and work together, making sure we are all ready to face real-world challenges.

Boone County Office of Emergency Management

If you have any suggestions about content to add to the Chronicle, please don't hesitate to reach out by emailing
EM@boonecountymo.org.



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ready.boonemo.org

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