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document.getElementById('elastomer996').style.display = get_style996(); }
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By JESSICA CRAWFORD

• Daily Leader

Spreading out a map on the hood of the car just minutes before heading out on the open road has become a thing of the past. The Kansas Department of Transportation, with the introduction of www.KanDrive.org, can help any traveller plan their adventure with just the click of a mouse. According to KDOT Public Affairs Manager Calvin Carter, the relaunching of the Web site couldn't have come at a more convenient time for Kansans – the holiday season.

"It is just for anyone that needs to travel," Carter said. "You can get on there to plan your route, look at weather, and it even has camera snapshots of highways. Although, I don't think they have anything this far south at this time, I think Garden City is as far south as pictures are concerned at this time.

"It has the interactive color-coded map stating things like if roads have snow, roads are closed," he added. "It is a great tool."

After much testing, KDOT has worked out most of the bugs, so to speak, to ensure the site is working efficiently for all who utilize it.

"It is up and running great," he said. "I have been on it a couple of times. They have been testing it, and it has been running very good."

Not only is the Web site proving to be a useful tool for Kansas drivers, the 511 service KDOT also provides can furnish up-to-the-minute information as well.

"With 511, you can call and it will tell you what routes are covered in snow, undergoing road construction and detours," Carter said. "It will give you any information you need regarding travel so you can plan to take a different route or maybe even not go on your trip.

"Just dial 511, no pound or star necessary," he explained. "It is available from any landline phone or wireless, it doesn't matter. It will give you information for Kansas and Nebraska – all highways."

Carter is proud to inform Kansas drivers the information is updated in a very timely manner to provide real-time information for travellers.

"The phone information is updated every hour and then as far as the map online, it is usually updated every five to 10 minutes," he said. "It is very current so just before you get ready to leave you can just hop online or call – it is very helpful."

According to Carter, the Web site can easily be accessed by any cellular device with internet access.

"In a phone, you can enter 511mm.ksdot.org, and that will have the same feature as the site," he said. "But, of course, we ask that you don't do that while you are driving."

Carter wishes to express to Kansas drivers to be very careful this holiday season. KDOT especially would like to remind drivers never to drink and drive.

"Don't drink and drive," he said. "That is one of the biggest things we would like to remind drivers. Kansas now has the second largest increase in the nation of drunk driving accidents, right behind New Hampshire. That is the most important thing – don't drink and drive."

Carter would also like to encourage drivers to get online and check out the resources KDOT has available this holiday season.

"Utilize these resources we are providing so you won't get caught up in traffic or bad weather,"

he said. "You can possibly even shorten your trip.

"That is why we made it," he concluded. "To help everyone have a happy and safe trip through Kansas."

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