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***MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**JOINT MEDIA RELEASE FROM THE
ONTARIO COUNTY HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION
AND THE ONTARIO COUNTY OFFICE OF SHERIFF**

With the winter driving season upon us, the Ontario County Highway Superintendents Association and the Ontario County Sheriff's Office would like to remind area residents how they can help snow plowing crews in performing their jobs.

Motorists are encouraged to operate their vehicles at a reduced reasonable speed with regard to road conditions and poorer visibility due to blowing and drifting snow. Motorists should drive defensively keeping in mind that you could encounter black ice, a slow moving snowplow or other vehicles entering the highway from behind high snow banks. Brake in a safe and efficient manner.

Please be aware that the snow plow driver may back up his vehicle at an intersection in order to facilitate turning around to go in a different direction. Please do not follow the snow plow too closely.

Remember, that bridges and overpasses freeze first. In our cold and snowy winters, automobile drivers should remember to always wear their seat belt and make sure passengers do, too. Snow tires or, at the very least, all-season tires should be on your vehicle. Bring gloves, a coat and boots in case your car breaks down or gets stuck. Check the weather forecast for your destination. Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return.

When you are plowing out your driveway, it is recommended that the snow be plowed from the road to the sides of the driveway. It is best to pile the snow on the right side of your driveway as you face the highway. This will help to keep snow from being plowed back into your driveway by the highway crews. Snow should not be plowed from driveways and across a highway. Not only is this type of snow removal illegal but the snow that is left behind in the highway presents a hazard to the motoring public and results in the Highway Department making a costly trip back to remove this snow hazard. The Highway Superintendents and the Sheriff's Office also encourage parents to make certain their children are not playing on or in the snow banks adjacent to the highway.

To ease the job of the highway snow removal crew, homeowners should shovel away the snow from around their mailbox. Not only does this allow mail to be delivered but provides the opportunity for the plow operators to see the mailbox. Unfortunately, many mailboxes are damaged yearly by heavy snow and ice as it is being removed from the roadway. The Ontario County Highway Superintendents Association reports that their crews are aware of the damage that is done to mail boxes by snow removal and as many precautions as are possible are taken to prevent mail box damage. When this unintentional damage occurs, it is the homeowner's responsibility to repair or replace the mailbox. The Highway Superintendents understand the frustration of homeowners when this type of unintentional damage occurs but they point out that the municipality cannot legally reimburse for mailbox damage while the municipality is engaged in snow removal.

The Ontario County Sheriff's Office also reminds motorists that parking along the highway, in snow plow turn-arounds and school bus turn-arounds, also can be hazardous and prevent highway crews from removing snow properly. If your vehicle becomes disabled, first notify the Sheriff's Office, then try to remove the vehicle as soon as possible. If the operator fails to follow these mentioned steps, the vehicle may get towed at the owner's expense for hampering snow removal.