

Title: 511 Traveler Information Program Information

OVERVIEW

511 Traveler Information Program Information

For real time traveler information and more, visit www.511wi.gov or call 511.

WHAT IS WISCONSIN 511?

The Wisconsin 511 alerts travelers to free, real-time Wisconsin traveler information. A service of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the Wisconsin 511 traveler information system is accessible on the web by visiting 511wi.gov and on your phone by calling 511 when in Wisconsin.

511 users have access to traffic and road conditions, road construction and lane closures, travel times, traffic incidents and other delays, as well as information on roadside services such as rest area locations.

511 USER ADVANTAGES

- **Reliable traveler information at your fingertips.** The 511 system is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year to assist you with traffic updates that may affect your travel.
- **Phone/Mobile Device:** Call 511 for the latest traveler information.
- **Web:** The web site provides all of the information available through the phone system, plus maps detailing travel times and road conditions. Additional information is also available from roadway cameras and dynamic message signs.
- **Twitter:** Real-time automated traffic incident alerts populate statewide and regional Twitter feeds. Visit [WisDOT's Stay Connected page](#) for a complete list of WisDOT social media accounts.

Never use 511 when driving! Have someone else in the car dial in; call or check the web site before you begin your journey; or pull off the highway, park in a safe place, and then make the call. Keep your focus on driving when driving!

DEVELOPER INFORMATION

Wisconsin 511 makes its traffic information available for third party providers to use upon request. For access to the XML feed please send your request to 511wi@dot.wi.gov.

Access to and use of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) 511wi website is provided subject to these terms and conditions. Please read these terms at [WisDOT Legal Notices link](#).

511 USER INSTRUCTIONS

PHONE AND MOBILE DEVICES

Never use 511 when driving! Have someone else in the car dial in; call or check the web site before you begin your journey; or pull off the highway, park in a safe place, and then make the call. Keep your focus on driving when driving!

By dialing 511 on your telephone or cell phone, you can access traveler information on major Wisconsin highways, including:

- Incident reports
- Lane closures
- Work zones
- Winter road conditions

After dialing 511, you will hear a welcome message; then you will be asked if you want information about traffic and roads, public transit, roadside services, other services. The service is free for land-line users and normal airtime charges apply for cell phone users. The system is voice or keypad activated. Request information by saying:

TRAFFIC AND ROADS or press 1

PUBLIC TRANSIT or press 2

ROADSIDE SERVICES or press 3

OTHER SERVICES or press 4

OTHER STATES or press 5

MY PROFILES or press 6

When making your choice, speak clearly and minimize any background noise, including radios and open windows.

You can navigate through the system using speech only, touch tone only or a combination of both. For example, you can request information about I-94 by saying: "I-94" or by entering 94# on your keypad. The system will ask you for an exit, mile marker, city or county on that road.

It will then tell you current road conditions, whether there are lane restrictions ahead, or if there are any incidents (like crashes) between your location and destination that may affect travel.

You may interrupt the 511 voice prompts at any time.

- Say "HELP" for detailed instructions.
- Say "MAIN MENU" to start over.
- Say "NEXT," "PREVIOUS," "STOP" or "REPEAT" while listening to traffic reports.
- Say "FEEDBACK" to give feedback about the system.
- Say "MY PROFILES" for personalized trip information created at <http://my511.511wi.gov/> . Pre-registering your phone or cell phone below allows you to personalize your trip information under "MY PROFILES."

To reach the system from out of state, or if your phone provider does not recognize 511, dial toll- free 866-511-WISC (9472).

If you need to report an emergency, dial 911.

WEB

By visiting www.511wi.gov, you can access all of the traveler information available through the 511 system.

TWITTER

The most up to date information about WisDOT's Twitter and other social media accounts can be found on the department's stay connected page at <http://www.dot.wi.gov/util/stayconnected.htm>

WisDOT's 511 Twitter account provides traffic incident tweets with initial "alerts," "updates," or as "cleared" incidents. Every incident tweet contains a county, an incident description (e.g. crash or delay), the highway and direction, nearest intersection, lanes affected, and a link to the main Wisconsin 511 web site.

There are a few different ways to receive tweets. If you have a Twitter account or would like to start one:

1. Go to Twitter.com and sign in or register a new account.
2. For each Twitter feed you want to receive, go to the account URL listed in the table above and click "follow." The tweets from the accounts you follow will now appear in your account's "tweets" tab.
3. If you wish to receive the TIA tweets as text messages to your cell phone, click the "mobile" tab in your user profile, enter your cell phone number, and follow the on-screen instructions. To enable one or more of the TIA accounts for mobile notifications, click on a TIA account and then click the mobile phone icon next to the "following" button.

If you do not have a Twitter account and just want to receive regional 511 Wisconsin travel information tweets as text messages to your cell phone:

1. From your cell phone, text **follow account_name** to 40404, where **account_name** is the account name of the Twitter account shown at <http://www.dot.wi.gov/util/stayconnected.htm>.
2. You will receive a confirmation text that you are now following the account. This confirmation message also contains instructions on how to stop receiving texts.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The following topic areas are covered in the frequently asked questions section:

- General information and scope
- Alerts
- Traffic map
- Winter road conditions
- Phone tips
- Phone system access
- Technical requirements
- Additional information

GENERAL INFORMATION AND SCOPE

What information is in the Wisconsin 511 system?

The 511 system provides information on:

- Emergency alerts about major traffic issue
- Traffic conditions, camera images, speeds
- Work zones and construction reports
- Transit services
- Intercity bus and rail services
- Paratransit services
- Carpools and vanpools
- Park-and-ride lot locations
- Airports and airport access services
- Ferries, tunnels and bridges
- Commercial vehicle information
- Bicycling

What is the extent of information in the Wisconsin 511 system?

The 511 system covers the transportation network and services throughout the state of Wisconsin. Traffic information is provided along the state highway network only.

Where does the information originate?

The information in the Wisconsin 511 system comes from many transportation and police agencies in Wisconsin and surrounding states. Traffic management centers monitor and provide traffic condition information to the Wisconsin 511 system. Staff at these centers receive highway condition information from law enforcement and transportation officials, freeway service team drivers, 911 calls, construction crews, traffic cameras and roadway sensors. Transit information comes from local transit providers.

How current is the information?

Information on traffic conditions is provided in real-time. Look for the time stamp associated with data on each page.

- Speed and travel time data is updated every minute
- Camera images are updated every three minutes.
- Information on incidents is updated by agency staff as conditions are updated from the scene.
- Information on road construction and maintenance is updated as new work is started or completed, or as travel conditions change.
- Winter roadway conditions are updated at least four times a day during winter months and more frequently during storms.
- Other information, such as construction projects or transit schedule changes, is updated as soon as this information becomes available.
- Agency contact information changes infrequently.

What about those who don't want to call 511?

WisDOT works closely with radio stations and TV stations to make sure they have the most accurate information possible about the conditions of our roads.

How does Wisconsin 511 differ from travel information on the radio and television?

Wisconsin 511 is another information source for travelers that complements radio and TV broadcasts. WisDOT partners with media providers to ensure they have the most up-to-date information to report to the public. When you visit Wisconsin 511 directly, you can expect to receive more detailed, current and route-specific traffic information than is provided in a short, general traffic news slot. Beyond this, the Wisconsin 511 system offers a broad range of information on transit services, carpooling , and many other services.

How does 511 differ from 911 and 311 phone services?

Here are the three-digit service numbers adopted by the telephone industry and the Federal Communications Commission:

| | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 211 | Health and Human Services | Community information and referral services |
| 311 | Local Government Services | Non-emergency police and other government services. |
| 411 | Directory Assistance | Fee-based telephone number inquiries |
| 511 | Travel and Transportation Free. Available in many states. | |
| 711 | Telecom Relay Services | Communications assistance for people with hearing or speech impairments to communicate via a communications assistant |
| 811 | Diggers Hotline | Know what's below. Call before you dig |
| 911 | Emergency Services | Report police, fire or medical emergencies |

What are incidents?

Incidents disrupt the normal flow of traffic or transit services, including crashes, vehicle breakdowns and road debris. In extreme cases, incidents may require a roadway to be closed.

Can there be delays without an incident?

Delays also can occur because of special events, construction advisories, bad weather conditions or high traffic volume.

What about alternate routes to avoid incidents reported on Wisconsin 511?

Ask the Wisconsin 511 phone system about conditions on the alternate route you are considering, or view the closures, incidents, construction and current traffic speeds.

Why aren't there cameras, message signs, speed, and winter road condition information available for all roadways?

Cameras, signs and sensors are installed along roads with the most traffic; primarily on major routes like interstates and state-maintained highways. Traffic patterns are reviewed periodically to determine where additional equipment should be installed. Winter road condition information is limited to the road segments that are able to be regularly monitored by law enforcement personnel.

ALERTS

What are the scrolling alerts on the Wisconsin 511 web site?

The alerts are warnings or information about major incidents affecting the transportation network.

What is Amber Alert?

This is an early-warning system to help find abducted children. AMBER stands for America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response. This is a cooperative program among law enforcement, broadcasters, transportation agencies and others to immediately involve the public, especially motorists, in the search for an abducted child. If you witness a child abduction, contact your local law enforcement agency or 911 to report it quickly. Note important information, such as the physical characteristics of the child and suspect; the make and model of any vehicles involved (including license plate numbers if possible); and the precise location of the abduction.

TRAFFIC MAP

How to change the area shown on the Traffic Conditions map?

The map starts out with a view of the whole state. Click on the region you are interested in and then use the "Zoom To" feature to jump to a metro area chosen from the drop down list ("Zoom To" is located immediately above the map). Otherwise, use Google's map navigation buttons:

To change Location:

Arrows - Click the appropriate arrow buttons to move the view north, south, east or west. Click to return to your original view.

Mouse - Depress the left mouse button and drag the map to pan to a new area.

To Change Zoom Level:

Zoom In – Click to zoom in on the center of the map.

Zoom Out – Click to zoom out.

Zoom Slider - Drag the zoom slider up or down to zoom in or out incrementally.

How long does it take for an accident icon to appear on the map?

After an accident has been entered into the system, it is immediately available to the public.

Why doesn't an accident appear on the map?

All major crashes and other events reported to us that occur on the state highway system will be included in the Wisconsin 511 system; however, there may be some delay getting accurate information from transportation employees or other first responders at the incident scene. Crashes that may not cause major disruption may not be included, particularly if they occur on local roads.

The information on a Wisconsin 511 web page I viewed looks dated. Why?

To see the latest information on the Wisconsin 511 web site, make sure your web browser is set to refresh pages automatically so it checks for newer versions of stored web pages. Otherwise, the version of a page stored on your hard drive from your last visit will be loaded. Also, during a session select Refresh or Reload from your browser's menu or press the appropriate toolbar icon.

How to make icons display faster?

To improve performance, select only the information categories you really want. The more legend items you select, the longer it will take to display icons on the map.

WINTER ROAD CONDITIONS**Where is find information about winter road conditions?**

Road condition information is available from the Wisconsin 511 web site and phone system.

What information is available?

Our Winter Road Conditions system describes driving conditions on many of Wisconsin's most-traveled roads. Conditions are displayed on a zoom-able, color-coded map based on reports directly from law enforcement in the field. Conditions are updated at least four times a day during winter months and more frequently during storms.

What do the different winter road condition categories mean?

Good Winter Driving: Winter driving conditions exist. This includes dry and wet roadways, but any precipitation on the road is not freezing. A wet condition could result in reduced traction.

Slippery Stretches: The roadway to be partially covered (up to 50 percent) or mostly covered (more than 50 percent) with snow, sleet, slush, ice or other precipitation. Drivers may experience periods when roadway markings are difficult to see. With continued precipitation, the roadway surface may become slick, snow packed and rutted.

Snow Covered: The roadway is completely covered with snow or similar precipitation. Roadway markings are obscured making it difficult to differentiate between the roadway and its surroundings. These conditions can make travel difficult and hazardous.

Ice Covered: The roadway is completely covered with ice or similar precipitation. Roadway markings are obscured making it difficult to differentiate between the roadway and its surroundings. These conditions can make travel difficult and hazardous.

Travel Not Advised: The roadway has deteriorated to the point that it is very dangerous to travel. Some weather conditions can be severe enough that roadway treatments, such as salt or sand, are not effective.

No Information: No information is available at this time on this segment.

Note: These definitions are intended to provide information to the public regarding the status of the roads reported from approximately October to April. However, please remember that road conditions may change rapidly, and the status of current conditions is not always readily available. Road condition reports are only made on select routes along the state highway network. These conditions are reported by the Wisconsin State Patrol and are updated at a minimum of four times per day. A roadway with no report available does not indicate that normal winter driving is possible; adverse driving conditions may be present. It is always important for the public to be prepared to exercise caution while driving during the winter months.

PHONE SYSTEM ACCESS

When is the Wisconsin 511 phone system available?

The 511 phone service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

How much does it cost to make a Wisconsin 511 call?

Wisconsin 511 does not charge for the call. Calling Wisconsin 511 from a landline phone will cost the same as making a local call. If you use a cell phone, airtime and roaming charges may apply.

Will I be able to call Wisconsin 511 from anywhere in the state?

Wisconsin 511 is available all across Wisconsin. Telephone service providers will need to establish the ability to route Wisconsin 511 calls to the system. Contact your telephone company if you are unable to reach the Wisconsin 511 service. The 511 system is also available by calling (866) 511-WISC (9472).

What languages does the Wisconsin 511 system use?

Information in the Wisconsin 511 phone system and web site is presented in English.

Will my call be dropped if it cannot be transferred to another system?

No, the Wisconsin 511 service will keep you on the line until your call is successfully transferred to a partner agency when you select this option.

Can my Internet phone be used (Voice Over IP/VoIP) to call Wisconsin 511?

This depends on whether your provider offers an address translation service (primarily used to identify your location for 911 or E911). If so, when you call Wisconsin 511 your call will be routed to the Wisconsin 511 system if your registered address is in Wisconsin. The following VoIP carriers provide this address translation service: AT&T Wireless, AT&T Wireline, Frontier Communications, OneCommunications, Sprint (Including Nextel), T-Mobile, Verizon Wireless, Verizon Wireline.

Does Wisconsin 511 have an 800 number option?

Yes. Call (866) 511-WISC (9472).

What if the system is busy?

With Wisconsin 511, your call will always be answered. If there is an unusually high volume of calls when you called, your call will be put in a queue to interact with the system. We are monitoring call volumes and will add capacity if needed.

Why can't I reach Wisconsin 511?

There are several reasons why you might not be able to access the Wisconsin 511 phone system:

1. Cell phone reception is poor. Try calling back from another location.
2. Your telephone company doesn't provide access to Wisconsin 511. Most land line and cellular service carriers in Wisconsin allow access to the 511 system. If your carrier is not listed, ask it to support Wisconsin 511. If your carrier does not support Wisconsin 511, you can reach Wisconsin 511 via our toll-free number: (866) 511-WISC (9472).
3. Your phone system at work does not support dialing Wisconsin 511. Many businesses have their own telephone systems that may need to be reprogrammed to allow direct access to the Wisconsin 511 system. Contact your office manager or telephone system administrator to have them enable access to

Wisconsin 511. Your cell phone is using a cell tower in a neighboring state. When you call from an area near a bordering state, your cell phone may use a cell tower in that state, not in Wisconsin, preventing you from accessing Wisconsin 511. If this happens, dial our toll-free number, (866) 511-WISC (9472).

4. You are calling from another state. Dialing 511 will connect you with the 511 system in the state from which you are calling, if available. Call the Wisconsin 511 toll-free number (866) 511-WISC (9472).
5. You are calling from a pay phone that has not been programmed for 511. Call the Wisconsin 511 toll-free number (866) 511-WISC (9472)).

How can I connect to other 511 telephone services?

Wisconsin 511 will transfer your call to travel information services in Iowa or Minnesota depending on the Wisconsin 511 calling region menu you are using (the Wisconsin 511 region must be adjacent to the state or province). To connect with other adjacent 511 systems, say "Other 511 Systems" at the Main Menu.

What do I do when the system does not understand my voice commands?

Wisconsin 511 uses a state-of-the-art voice-recognition system to guide you through the menu options. The system might have difficulty responding to your request if:

- you said something the system is not programmed to recognize at that particular menu;
- it cannot understand your voice; or
- there is background noise, such as a radio or people talking near you, preventing the system from understanding you.

Reduce background noise and speak as clearly as possible in a normal tone of voice. If you are using a cell phone and you have a low signal, try calling back when you get a better one.

If you still have problems, use numeric touch-tone commands.

How do hearing-impaired use the phone system?

Hearing-impaired callers can dial 711 or visit <http://www.i711.com/> for assistance on-line to access Wisconsin 511 information. 711 is the national three-digit number for access to Telecommunication Relay Services (TRS). Callers dial 711 and ask the operator to connect them to the 511 service. Once connected, the 711 operator acts as a go-between, relaying callers' request for travel information to the 511 system and then providing system responses back to the callers.

How do speech-impaired use the phone system?

Speech-impaired callers can use the touch-tone system to access information from the 511 system. Press "*8" to go to touch-tone only mode, then press the number that matches your choice. Once you learn the touch-tones, there is no need to press zero to hear the list of choices; just enter your selection.

How accessible is the Wisconsin 511 web site for vision-impaired?

The Wisconsin 511 web site has been designed to meet the accessibility policies of the state. Most of the material on the web site will be in HTML or ASCII (plain text) formats. However, some of the files may require users to have installed the following specific software or plug-ins to interpret the page content: Adobe Acrobat Portable Document Format (PDF), Adobe Flash and Microsoft Office.

PHONE TIPS

Is an operator available to help?

The Wisconsin 511 phone service is an automated, interactive voice system driven by the user's voice or phone keys. Voice recordings will give the latest computerized information. There are options to transfer to a specific transportation agency for additional information not offered directly through the Wisconsin 511 phone system.

How to get help navigating the phone menus?

Say, "Help" or "What are my choices?" at any time to hear your options for the current menu. To return to a previous menu, say, "Go back." To start over, say "Main Menu."

How to navigate through the system to get needed information more quickly?

Callers can interrupt the System (barge in) at any time to get the information they are looking for more quickly using voice command shortcuts or touch tone keys. Once you know what questions will be asked, you can answer them as soon as the system starts asking them. You do not need to wait until the end of a question before answering.

Use Voice Command Shortcuts or Touch Tone Keys

Shortcuts are voice commands that bypass a menu and take you directly to your choice.

| Say | Press | Action |
|------------------------------|-------|--|
| Help What are my choices? | 0 | Lists of all choices for the current menu. |
| Main Menu | * | States Main Menu options. |
| Repeat | NA | Repeats the last question or list of choices. |
| Stop Cancel Go Back | NA | Halts the system from listing menu options and goes back to the previous menu. |
| Goodbye | NA | Ends the call. |

How do I prevent being transferred to an agency that I don't want?

After you tell the Wisconsin 511 phone system which agency you want, it will confirm your request by repeating the agency's name. If you select an agency and the system reads back a different name, right away say "Stop," "Go Back" or Press 1 to stop the transfer and choose again. If you did not catch this in time, call back and try again.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Who to call to report an incident on a highway?

As with all emergencies, if you see an accident or a road hazard, such as a downed tree, flooding or debris in the road, dial 911. Report the location and direction (note the nearest highway mile marker if you can).

How can I provide feedback about the Wisconsin 511 system?

If you have a specific suggestion about how we can improve, tell us using our feedback form or leave a message using the Wisconsin 511 phone system. Say "feedback" at any time and you will be prompted to leave a recorded message. Another option is to email us your feedback at 511wi@dot.wi.gov. We also will conduct periodic phone and web surveys to get feedback.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Can I use Wisconsin 511 from any computer?

Yes. Any computer that has access to the Internet, a compatible browser and security settings to allow cookies will be able to use the Wisconsin 511 web site.

What types of other electronic devices are supported?

Travel and transportation information is accessible using web-enabled phones and devices with a standard browser.

What web browsers work with Wisconsin 511?

Wisconsin 511 has been tested with Internet Explorer 8.0 and above, and Firefox 15.0 and above. Other browsers also may work.

What are cookies and why are they used by Wisconsin 511?

Cookies are a small amount of data sent to your web browser from a web server and stored on your computer.

They are only used to save your latest map view which can save you navigation time when you visit 511wi.gov the next time. The cookies used by our Wisconsin 511 system do not contain any personal information about you and the information in them cannot be accessed by other web sites.