When Roadwork is Weather Dependent

Weather plays a major role in Colorado construction. Cold temperatures snow, rain, and wind can affect the construction schedule, not just day-to-day, but at times, hour-to-hour.

Ground temperature is a significant concern in winter, early spring, and late fall, especially when we reach freezing temperatures. Excavating for underground utility work and roadway widening becomes extremely difficult and unproductive when the ground is frozen. Freezing temperatures can also impact machinery, equipment and material usability.

Much of the **material** used for paving and resurfacing is weather and temperature dependent; therefore it cannot be applied until conditions are warmer and dry. Placing concrete, for example, requires warmer temperatures during the curing process to preserve long-term durability and avoid future cracking. Sometimes, contractors will employee cold weather protection, but this adds cost and time to the project.

Other operations, like striping lane lines, pavement preservation treatments and asphalt paving cannot be performed at lower temperatures, or in wet or snowy conditions.

For these reasons, during the winter, early spring, and late fall, construction work is often described as “weather dependent” and the scheduled work is subject to change. This means that the suggested construction date and time may need to be postponed several hours or several weeks, depending upon allowable traffic closures and lane restriction policies in place to minimize traffic impacts.

Sometimes, these sudden changes can result in unforeseen extended traffic congestion beyond the approved closure period; and that’s why we recommend using alternatives routes, whenever possible to avoid the cone zone.

Get updated roadwork information on our Traffic Alerts webpage. For state roads, visit cotrip.org.

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