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North Dakota Highway Patrol

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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02/14/2019

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NDDOT Snow Plows Hit – Southeast ND February 4-15

Fargo, ND –

Since February 4th, there have been six incidents in the southeast portion of North Dakota involving NDDOT snow plows. Five of the incidents occurred on I-94 and one on I-29. The incidents are described below:

1. On February 4th at approximately 5:15 am, a NDDOT snow plow was actively removing snow from eastbound I-94 near MM 285, about 5 miles west of Valley City. The snow plow was removing snow from the right lane and shoulder of eastbound I-94. While traveling east, the snow plow struck an abandoned two axle trailer. The trailer had been abandoned the previous evening because of a tire issue. Warning devices were not present notifying passing traffic of trailers location, nor was law enforcement notified the trailer had been abandoned. Snow and blowing snow at the time of the crash obscured the trailer from the snow plow operators view. No one was injured in the crash.
2. On February 4th at approximately 2:08 pm, a NDDOT snow plow was actively removing snow from eastbound I-94 near MM 289, about 1 mile west of Valley City. The snow plow was traveling in the left lane of eastbound I-94. There was blowing and drifting snow at the time. A 2009 Saturn Vue came upon the snow plow and rear ended the snow plow. The crash resulted in no injuries. The driver of the Saturn, Briana Benedict, 19 YOA, Fargo, ND, was cited for Care Required.
3. On February 6th at approximately 9:19 pm, a NDDOT snow plow towing a tow plow was clearing the eastbound I-94 Exit 350 off-ramp (25th St. Exit – Fargo). The snow plow was in the left turn lane of the exit ramp and the tow plow was in the center lane. While the snow plow operator was waiting at the red light at the intersection, a 2003 Chevrolet Trailblazer driven by Corey Bennington, 43 YOA, Fargo, ND, drove around the tow plow and stopped in front of it in the center lane of the exit ramp. The snow plow operator could not see the Chevrolet beside him. When the light turned green, the snow plow operator began to proceed and the tow plow struck the Chevrolet. There were no injuries in the crash.
4. On February 12th at approximately 3:00 pm, a NDDOT snow was clearing snow on I-29 near MM 1 at the South Dakota border when it was rear ended by another vehicle. The Richland County Sheriff's Office investigated this crash. More information on the crash can be provided by them.

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5. On February 14th at approximately 11:05 pm, a NDDOT snow plow was clearing snow at the I-94 Exit 347 (Veteran's Blvd) westbound off-ramp. A snow plow was clearing snow from the off-ramp near the intersection with Veteran's Blvd. The snow plow operator was attempting to reverse on the off-ramp to clear additional snow near the intersection. Unbeknownst to the snow plow operator, a 2006 Ford Freestar van came to a stop behind the snow plow, instead of going around the snow plow. When the snow plow operator began to back up, the snow plow struck the front of the Ford. There were no injuries in the crash.

6. On February 15th at approximately 12:30 am, a NDDOT snow plow and NDDOT front-end loader were working in tandem on the I-94 Exit 347 (Veteran's Blvd) overpass. The snow plow was in front of the front-end loader clearing snow from the right turn lane on the southbound roadway of the overpass. The front-end loader was behind the pickup, providing traffic control. A Mazda 6, driven by Kacie Hagen, 28 YOA, Fargo, ND, was southbound on Veteran's Blvd. She failed to observe the front-end loader and rear ended it. Kacie was arrested for Driving Under the Influence and cited for Open Container and Use of a Wireless Device (Texting While Driving). There were no injuries in the crash.

The NDHP would remind motorists to give NDDOT snow plows the space necessary to safely remove the snow and ice from our roadways. Numerous snow plows have been struck statewide this year. NDDOT snow plows and other snow removal equipment have emergency lighting to make traffic aware of their location. Blowing snow and snow fog may obscure these lights and the NDDOT equipment at times. Always slow down when approaching a snow plow and pass safely when you can clearly see around the snow plow and the snow plow operator would be able to see you. If your vision is obscured by the snow fog a plow is creating, stay back, slow your speed, turn on your hazard lights and wait for the plow operator to pull over to allow traffic to pass. Don't ever blindly drive into a snow fog without slowing down. In addition, do not become distracted while driving and never drink and drive.

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