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NJDOT announces proactive 511NJConnect system to keep stranded motorists informed during extended highway closures **Alert system uses geo-fencing technology to provide information to motorists**

(Trenton)- New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti today announced the launch of 511NJConnect, a new alert system that allows transportation agencies the ability to proactively provide information directly to motorists who are stuck in long-term highway closures.

At the conclusion of the last winter, Commissioner Gutierrez-Scaccetti directed New Jersey's transportation agencies to find a way to use technology to keep motorists better informed in the event of an extended highway closure.

"We all understand the frustration and stress that can be caused by being stuck in traffic for an extended period of time," Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti said. "While we hope we never have to use it, 511NJConnect is an innovative way to use technology to provide motorists information and status updates during a long-term road closure. Just knowing that there is someone out there monitoring the situation can be extremely reassuring."

In the event of a sustained stoppage of traffic, the 511NJConnect system, using geo-fencing technology, will identify motorists in the proximity of the incident and send an alert to their hand-held devices. Motorists within the target area will be given the option to register for automatic text messaging or phone updates throughout the event generated by transportation agency staff monitoring the situation. Once the incident is resolved, motorists who registered for the alerts will be automatically unsubscribed from the system and all personal data will be removed.

The system will allow direct communication and updates about the incident to those motorists who are impacted. **511NJConnect is not a substitute for calling 9-1-1** if a motorist has an actual emergency in their vehicle.

Developed in coordination with the New Jersey State Police, the 511NJConnect system will be used for long-term traffic incidents in which motorists become immobilized for an extended period of time on New Jersey's Interstate highways, the New Jersey Turnpike, the Garden State Parkway, or the Atlantic City Expressway.

NJDOT remains committed to providing safe roadways to New Jersey motorists and in anticipation of the winter season, the Department is implementing this proactive approach to assist and inform motorists in the event of an unforeseen extended closure of a highway.

Motorists should keep a basic emergency kit in their vehicles that includes non-perishable food and water, a cell phone charger, weather-related items such as a blanket, shovel, ice scraper, or rain gear, and any specialized supplies such as baby or pet care items. Visit ReadyNJ.gov for more information about emergency kits and preparedness.

About the 511NJ Suite of Services -- The [511NJ.org website](http://511NJ.org), phone system, Personalized Travel Service, and *New Jersey Traffic* features provide valuable real-time traffic and traveler information about incidents, crashes, congestion, construction, special events, and travel times. The Department updates this information 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.

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