

# **Inclement Weather Procedures for USAG Ansbach**

USAG Ansbach Public Affairs and Department of Emergency Services

## **What are the first steps, when inclement weather (fog, snow, ice) occurs?**

Military Police patrol cars check specific routes on and off post between 2 a.m. and 4 a.m. The patrols then forward their information to the Director of Emergency Services (DES). The DES consults with the Garrison Commander by 5 a.m. and posts the weather conditions by 5:30 a.m. if necessary. In case of overnight snow fall, DPW and local German snow removal services begin around 4 a.m. Their focus is on primary roads and secondary roads may not be cleared depending on the amount of snow.

The road condition is a **general** call and may not reflect the situation in specific areas. Weather is not identical everywhere within USAG Ansbach and everyone should assess their local situation, use the published road conditions as a guideline and determine their own course of action.

Check the USAG Ansbach Official Twitter account and Facebook page before you head out. Soldiers, please in with your supervisor, unit commanders make their own decisions based on garrison road conditions. Civilian employees, please check in with your supervisor to confirm any information you read or hear.

## **How is the community informed?**

Subscribe to USAG Ansbach Twitter for weather alerts at: <https://twitter.com/GarrisonAnsbach>. When a weather alert is posted, it will be preceded with the hash tag, #AnsbachAlert.

USAG Ansbach Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/usag.ansbach.7](http://www.facebook.com/usag.ansbach.7)

USAG Ansbach Road Condition message line: 09802-83-3882

IMCOM-Europe Road Condition & School Delay/Closure website at: [www.imcom-europe.army.mil/webs/sites/staff\\_org/safety/road\\_conditions/index.asp](http://www.imcom-europe.army.mil/webs/sites/staff_org/safety/road_conditions/index.asp).

AFN 360 Bavaria Live Stream at: [http://afn360.afneurope.net/afne\\_bav](http://afn360.afneurope.net/afne_bav)

AFN Europe at: 107.3 or 104.9.

AFN Bavaria Facebook page at: <http://www.facebook.com/afnbavaria>.

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## Road Conditions explained.

The road conditions are **Normal/Green**, **Hazardous/Amber**, **Dangerous/Red** and **Extremely Dangerous/Black**. These conditions are good indicators of the safety of roads on and off post. Soldiers and employees need to make an individual weather decision and call their supervisor if they feel it is unsafe to drive and get further instructions. Road conditions, published or unpublished, are not reason alone to miss work or official appointments. If the Garrison Commander determines that weather conditions make it necessary to close the installation it will be included in the road condition message.

**Normal/Green** - Dry road surface, no ice or snow on the road surface; visibility is more than 50 meters (160 feet).

**Hazardous/Amber** - Any of the following on the road surface: Patches of black ice/slush, up to four inches of snow and/or visibility between 20-50 meters (60 – 160 feet), slow down (below 50kph/32mph) and drive with caution.

**Dangerous/Red** - Any of the following on the road surface: Flooding, drifting snow, ice sheets, four to eight inches of snow and/or visibility is less than 20 meters (60 feet).

During significant winter weather with heavy prolonged snowfall and possibly delayed snow and ice removal, DES and the Garrison Commander may change the road conditions to **Dangerous/Red** and decide on a delay for school employees and children, and garrison employees in order to allow extra time for snow removal. Example: If a two-hour delay is announced, the school buses will arrive at the designated stops two hours later than usual. Garrison employees can arrive two hours after their normal/usual start time; this gives them ample time to take care of snow removal at home and take extra time while driving to work. Soldiers, please check in with your supervisor, unit commanders make their own decisions based on garrison road conditions.

**Extremely Dangerous/Black** - Any of the following on the road surface: Heavy flooding, heavy snow drifts, extreme sheets of ice, more than eight inches of snow and/or visibility less than 15 meters (50 feet).

If the conditions are **Extremely Dangerous/Black**, no military or privately owned vehicles will be allowed on or off post. The only exceptions are Emergency Services vehicles (fire trucks, MPs, etc.) and snow plows.

This does not mean you cannot drive on the roads off post, this means if you drive to an installation where the road conditions are **Extremely Dangerous/Black**, you will not be allowed to enter the installation. In these conditions everyone should make their decision on the safe side. If you are not sure you can drive safely or if the forecast calls for worsening conditions, do not drive.

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## **Winter Driving Tips.**

Reduce speed and increase distance between vehicles. Don't try to pass and be aware that fallen leaves and black ice may be on the road, and that bridges and overpasses may be slippery. Do not drive outside of your comfort zone or capabilities. If you are not sure about driving in winter weather, it may be better to postpone that trip.

Have the correct tires. Germany has a law that states you must have the correct tires on your vehicle for the conditions you are driving in. This means that if it is winter, as soon as it snows or rains you can be given a ticket for just driving with summer tires on. If you have an accident or incident and you do not have approved mud and snow, or snow tires, you can be ticketed on the spot and found liable for any damages incurred as you did not take due care to ensure your vehicle was properly equipped.

Approved tires for snow are marked with a mud & snow symbol (M&S), a snow flake symbol, or a mountain symbol. You must also have at least 4 mm of tread depth on your tires. To make sure you do, place an American penny with Abraham Lincoln's head pointing down in between the treads – if you can see the top of Abraham Lincoln's head, your tires do not have 4mm of tread depth and need to be replaced.

A common way used by Germans, to judge the time frame which you should have snow tires on is from October to Easter. Use snow chains, if necessary; definitely carry some "quick mounts" with you when you go driving in the mountains. Add extra travel time any time of the day, and, once again, slow down!

## **Snow and ice removal in housing and residential areas:**

Roads on post will be plowed as soon as possible, but please be careful and patient. All residents are responsible for snow removal from the pavement leading to their doors, and their own drive-ways. Leased housing (apartments or houses) and private rentals residents are responsible for snow and ice removal from their own drive-ways and on the public pavement bordering their residence. Make sure to check with your landlord on your responsibilities. In most cases, personnel living off post in private rental are required to keep their sidewalks and access to their property cleared from snow and ice 7 a.m. -7 p.m. every host nation work day.

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You may use special rock salt to remove packed snow and ice. This special rock salt is called Streusalz and is available for on post housing customers and in small quantities for units and organizations at the Self Help Issue Points (SHIP) on Katterbach and Storck Barracks (Katterbach Bldg. 5516 and Storck bldg. 6555). Off post residents can purchase Streusalz almost anywhere. Gas stations, supermarkets, and home improvement stores all have it. This salt works best when it has to melt only a thin layer of snow or ice. Remove as much snow from sidewalks and driveways before applying rock salt; apply the salt evenly and use no more than one handful per square yard. The salt will melt the snow and ice gradually. Keeping the ground free of ice and snow will prevent the build-up of thick ice sheets which are very hard to remove in freezing temperatures. Rock salt does not work well below 15 degrees Fahrenheit (-9 Celcius). Do not use rock salt over plants or lawns, as it will probably kill them. Do not use rock salt over metal, it will corrode the metal. Use it sparingly and not in areas where the melted snow will drain into streams, rivers, or lakes; salt residue can pollute the environment. Environmentally safe alternatives to salt are sand, fine gravel (grit) or organic granulate, which will not melt the ice, but give you traction and comply with local regulations.