

# GUARANTEED GAZETTE

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## TravelCenters of America Fuel 2019 Capitol Christmas Tree Journey

TravelCenters of America Inc. is covering all fuel costs associated with hauling the [2019 Capitol Christmas Tree](#). The “People’s Tree,” a 60-foot tall Blue Spruce, is to be cut today and begin its approximately 2,000-mile journey from New Mexico’s [Carson National Forest](#) to the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, DC, on Nov. 11.

We’re proud to help transport a true American symbol and be part of a tradition that means so much to so many,” said Barry Richards, president and COO of TravelCenters. “Supporting the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree initiative also allows us to celebrate the spirit of the season.”

The tree’s journey can be tracked in near real-time at the Capitol tree tracker’s [website](#) and will include a series of community celebrations Nov. 11-25 across the U.S., culminating with an official tree lighting on the West Lawn in early December.

The final public stop along the route will be on Nov. 23 at the Petro Stopping Center in Raphine, VA, also known as White’s Travel Center. The entire community is invited to see the tree, sign the banners on the truck, and enjoy food, crafts and more from 2 – 3 p.m. Petro Raphine is located at 2440 Raphine Road, along I-81/I-64, Exit 205.

Wilbanks Trucking Services, based in Artesia, NM, will transport the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree in a Kenworth W990. A second truck will haul smaller companion trees provided to decorate offices inside of the U.S. Capitol building and other sites throughout Washington, DC, along with 10,000 handmade ornaments created by New Mexicans. TA will fuel both trucks’ journeys from New Mexico to Washington, DC, and back, about 8,000 miles round trip.

Every year since 1970, the USDA Forest Service has provided a tree from a U.S. national forest to appear on the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol building for the holiday season. The Carson National Forest has partnered with nonprofit partner Choose Outdoors to bring the special gift from New Mexico to Washington, DC, for the 2019 season.

“The annual journey is only possible with the help of strong community partnerships throughout New Mexico and beyond state lines,” said Bruce Ward, president of Choose Outdoors. “We’re grateful for the time and resources TravelCenters of America is providing to help make this the best year yet.”



### In This Issue

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# Winter Driving Tips

## **Pay Attention To The Weather Forecast:**

It cannot be stressed enough that knowing what the weather is doing up ahead of you, or is going to do, or might do, or forecasters think there may be a chance of it doing, will help you plan your trip, manage your time, and stay clear of danger. Plan trips according to the weather conditions forecast, and keep up with any changes. Learn to read the weather radars, and check them frequently.

## **Avoid Using Your Jake Brakes:**

The Jake Brakes can be dangerous on slick roads because you are only applying braking pressure to the drive axles. You're running the risk of causing the drive axles to break loose. When braking on slick roads be sure to use the foot brake and avoid the Jake Brake if possible.

## **Increase your following distance:**

If at all possible double your following distance in the snow and wintery mix. I also will drop my speed, especially if I am dead heading. I am highly vigilant to avoid bunching and clustering with traffic and other trucks. In my opinion, space management is the single most important winter driving discipline there is. If that's the only thing you do...you should be able to keep yourself out of harms way.

## **Park The Truck:**

In the end, the decision to drive is the driver's alone, nobody else's. If you are not comfortable driving in the conditions then park the truck and don't let anyone else influence your decision. You will never find a storm so severe that nobody will take the risk of driving through it.. If you do drive knowing you may be encountering bad weather, be prepared to find a safe place to pull off the highway, or crawl along the shoulder until you reach an exit or rest stop, if necessary. Any time the highway departments start closing exits or stretches of interstate, it would be a good time to find a safe place to park the truck.

## **Prevent Braking When Possible:**

Increase your following distance and try to avoid situations that would require you to use the brake pedal. Take curves extra slow and get down to the proper speed before you get to the curve. You would like to avoid hitting your brakes in the middle of a curve.

## **Watch Your Mirror Brackets And Tires For Ice:**

The mirror brackets on your rig will often be the first place that ice starts to accumulate. If you're unsure whether the roads are icy or not, keep an eye on those mirror brackets. When ice starts forming on the brackets you know there could be ice on the roadways also. Also, watch the tires of other vehicles. If there is a wet spray coming off them then their might not be any ice on the highway, though this is no guarantee. If the roads look kind of wet but you don't see any spray coming off the tires it is highly likely you're on ice.

## **Drain Your Air Tanks Regularly:**

Make sure your air dryer is working properly and go out of your way to drain your air tanks regularly. You don't want any water in the air lines. The lines will freeze up and you'll have a heck of a time getting them cleared out.

## **Black Ice:**

Black ice is just regular ice, but virtually transparent, and while regular ice may appear shiny or different in color, large patches of black ice will appear the same color as the roadway. In conditions that were recently wet and at temperatures right around 32 degrees F, black ice forms on a surface and is almost unnoticeable.

## **Keep Electronics Charged:**

When possible, keep cell phones, laptop computers, etc., as well as batteries, plugged in while driving, to give you the most battery life in case of emergency. Mini portable external batteries are gaining popularity as a backup/additional power source for cell phones and tablets.

## **In Case Of Emergency On The Road In Winter:**

GPS, satellite tracking, etc., means that somebody, somewhere probably knows where you are. If you get stranded, stay calm and plot your next move.

Remember those extra batteries, and keeping things charged up? Depending on your level of emergency, call your company or emergency personnel.

If possible, and safe, never leave the truck. Not only will the truck offer protection from much of the weather, but a person walking through a snowstorm is much harder to find than a stranded truck.

**1-833-GTS-TANK**

## Fun Facts

- Autumn has been called the “hectic beauty of death.”
- Scientists believe global warming could affect autumn colors.
- The first Thanksgiving was celebrated in 1621 over a three day harvest festival.
- The flower for November is the chrysanthemum.
- Levels of testosterone in both men and women are at their highest in the fall.
- Turkey wasn’t on the menu at the first Thanksgiving. Venison, duck, goose, oysters, lobster, eel and fish were likely served.
- People who live on the equator or central area of the planet never experience autumn.
- November in the Northern Hemisphere is similar to May in the Southern Hemisphere.
- The word “harvest” comes from the Old Norse word *haust*, which means “to gather or pluck.”
- The tradition of football on Thanksgiving began in 1876 with a game between Yale and Princeton. The first NFL games were played on Thanksgiving in 1920.
- Several studies reveal that that summer-born children showed significantly lower development than those born in the autumn.
- In the original Roman calendar, November was the 9th month of the year. It got its name from the Latin word “*Novem*” which means nine. However, it became the 11th month when the Romans added in January and February to the start of the year.
- The average number of calories consumed on Thanksgiving is 4,500.

# Items To Take For Winter Driving

## **Warm Winter Clothes:**

A good winter jacket, hat or ski-mask, and gloves are absolutely essential to life on the road. In treacherous conditions, good winter protection could become vital. Pack clothes that can be "layered", rather than one bulky item. Waterproof gloves, while more expensive, will keep your hands warmer, longer, and allow you to keep using them, if necessary.

## **Good, Water-Proof Boots (and Good Socks):**

Waterproof and insulated boots with a good sole for traction. In case water does get in, good wool socks will help keep your feet warm for a short time.

## **Ice Scraper or Brush/Foldable Snow Shovel:**

There are several companies making all-in-one versions of the ice scraper-brush-snow shovel.. Also, windshield deicer is a useful item to keep on hand, as well.

## **Extra Snacks & Bottled Water:**

Non-perishable foods, like canned goods and pre-packaged snacks are generally items that will come in handy in any weather, but in case of emergency, or even if you have to wait out a blizzard, keeping food on hand will make it a bit more bearable.

## **Extra Blankets:**

In an emergency, or if you are stranded, will keep you warmer in case of mechanical issues that prevent the truck from running, or the heat in the truck from working.

## **Bag Of Ice Melt Or Road Salt:**

In case of snow or ice build-up in front of or behind the drive wheels, to help get the tractor moving.

## **Diesel Fuel Anti-gel:**

Diesel fuel, and other petroleum products, contains paraffin wax, which helps increase fuel engine power and MPG, and fuel stability, viscosity, and lubricity. It also likes to gel up and clog the fuel filter in very low temperatures, eventually preventing the engine from getting enough fuel to run

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*“Health is like money, we never have a true idea of its value until we lose it.”*

*- Josh Billings*

*“The only way to keep your health is to eat what you don’t want, drink what you don’t like and do what you’d rather not.”*

*- Mark Twain*

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# Common Health Issues Among Drivers

Sitting for a long period of time can lead to several health concerns, including obesity and metabolic problems. Increased blood pressure, high blood sugar, excess body fat in the abdomen, and spiking cholesterol levels should also be considered. These health issues may increase the risk of death from cardiovascular disease and cancer. Symptoms as simple as a headache can be an early sign of an underlying health concern. Be aware of any persistent discomfort, no matter how mild, and make an appointment with your doctor to have it checked out.

Some of the most common health issues drivers are facing in the trucking industry are:

- \* Obesity and stress, which can lead to high blood pressure and diabetes.
- \* Smoking which can cause cancer and chronic lung problems.
- \* High number of fatal injuries, 2/3 caused by highway accidents.
- \* Extreme fatigue, 1/3 of trucker accidents caused by dozing at the wheel.
- \* Dependence on stimulants to stay awake.
- \* Depression and loneliness from isolation on the job.
- Sleep Apnea

eat healthy  
live healthy  
be healthy

As mentioned before, bad habits can lead to health issues in very subtle ways. Poor personal hygiene, not getting enough exercise, smoking, improper food choices, and even skipping meals altogether are just a few. Be aware of these behaviors and take steps to avoid them if possible. Habits can be hard to break but, in the face of serious health problems, finding the willpower to do so is important. Use every resource available to find ways to change them.

Stress affects everyone in different ways, but we all must deal with it in a way that is best for each individual. Whether it is everyday stressors, like those you face driving or lifelong stressors such as finances, health problems or death in the family; there are ways to deal with stress, such as:

**Exercise** – While waiting for your truck to be loaded, walk, stretch or do any other exercise around your truck that keeps you active.

**Healthy snacks** – These could be hard to find once you are already on the road so plan ahead and bring them with you.

**Have fun** – When you are home make time to socialize with your friends and family to alleviate being alone so much and to keep you active.

Another issue that can cause stress is not finding a place to sleep. Since many rest stops are being shut down to reduce costs, it is becoming harder for truckers to find a safe place to rest. Many truckers have to park on the side of the interstate to catch a few hours of restless shut eye. The thought of not knowing how safe you are and the risk can be enough to keep anyone awake. It is important for drivers to plan their route out ahead of time so they can be safe and get the rest they deserve. A good night's rest can reduce stress and prevent some other health issues from occurring.

## Did you know?

Rock Hudson worked as a truck driver after World War II and before becoming an actor. Sean Connery worked as a truck driver early in his career, following in the footsteps of his father. Liam Neeson drove for Guinness, Chevy Chase drove a truck before joining "Saturday Night Live" and Elvis Presley drove a truck after graduating from high school.

## Contact Us

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