



People for Proper Policing in North Wales

Weather **causes** more chaos on North Wales' roads

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Snow in Pentre Halkyn

HEAVY snow and black ice **caused** road chaos across North Wales yesterday.

The elements combined with a period of low sunshine to affect traffic conditions and cause "snow blindness", notably in Wrexham and Flintshire.

Temperatures dropped to -1.7C and **led to** three serious crashes between 8am and 9am.

Wrexham County Council sent out gritters four times in five hours on Sunday night and into Monday morning, and it was the same in Flintshire.

Areas of the A55 and the A483 in Wrexham were gridlocked after crashes.

The first was in Wrexham, where icy roads led to a four-car pile-up on the A483 near Sainsbury's supermarket.

It caused major delays on Mold Road and routes into the town centre from 8am onwards. Emergency services were called though no injuries were sustained by any of the drivers or passengers.

Ambulance crews also attended a collision at 8.17am on the A55 near Valley, Holyhead.

A man in his 20s was taken to Ysbyty Gwynedd, Bangor for a check-up

At around 8.35am, two vehicles collided on the eastbound lane of the A55 near Pantasaph. The crash led to two miles of tailbacks and a woman in her 60s and a man aged around 40 were taken to Ysbyty Glan Clwyd in Bodelwyddan with whiplash injuries. North Wales Fire Service were called to the incident but were later stood down by police.

A spokeswoman for Wrexham Council said they had done their best to prevent incidents and had been out four times in five hours.

*She added: "We are aware of the crash in Wrexham this morning but they (the gritters) did all they could to keep the roads **safe**. They had to keep going out to salt the roads. First it rained and that froze over again, and then there was a hail shower. It kept happening so they kept going out. We only have one day's worth of grit left but are due to get another delivery tomorrow, so we'll be out again tonight or early tomorrow morning. Hopefully the weather won't be as bad as it has been today."*

In Flintshire, gritters were out three times in 12 hours according to a council spokesperson, who said: *"Gritters were out through the night on all the major roads. Twelve gritters have been out since 5.30am and around 80 tonnes of salt has been put out. Even though nearly half of the county's roads have been salted motorists should still drive with caution in the conditions."*

Met Office spokesman John Hammond said accidents early in the day in adverse weather conditions are common, adding: *"This snow blindness can be a problem at this time of year when people are driving to work and the sun is bright but low in the sky. It can make it difficult to see and can **cause accidents.**"*

The PPP comments ... the term 'dependency culture' also applies to our driver culture. We are depending on others to make our driving decisions for us, our speed, our position on the road, even our direction and route via SAT Navs,

These systems (incl. The MET office) are far from infallible and we must take back the responsibility for our actions as drivers.

We suggest that all drivers should use dipped headlights in low light and bad weather, wear sunglasses when driving into the setting and rising sun (reactalight polaroids for the wealthy!) Really **concentrate and drive at a **safe speed and distance** so as not to **surprise** yourself or any other road user. Modern low profile tyres on powerful vehicles encourages skidding on snow and aquaplaning in heavy rain. ABS on powerful brakes can result in **overconfidence** in our ability to **STOP**. As the reality of **global cooling** becomes obvious we may have to revert to snow tyres and chains or stay home.**

'TAKE CARE' is a popular farewell ... we really mean it!

For a discussion on driving in these conditions go to the Safespeed forum at www.safespeed.org.uk/forum/viewtopic.php?f=23&p=216348

and about aquaplaning go to ...

www.properpolicing.org.uk/articles/Traffic%20Officer%20Jailed%20After%20Crash.pdf