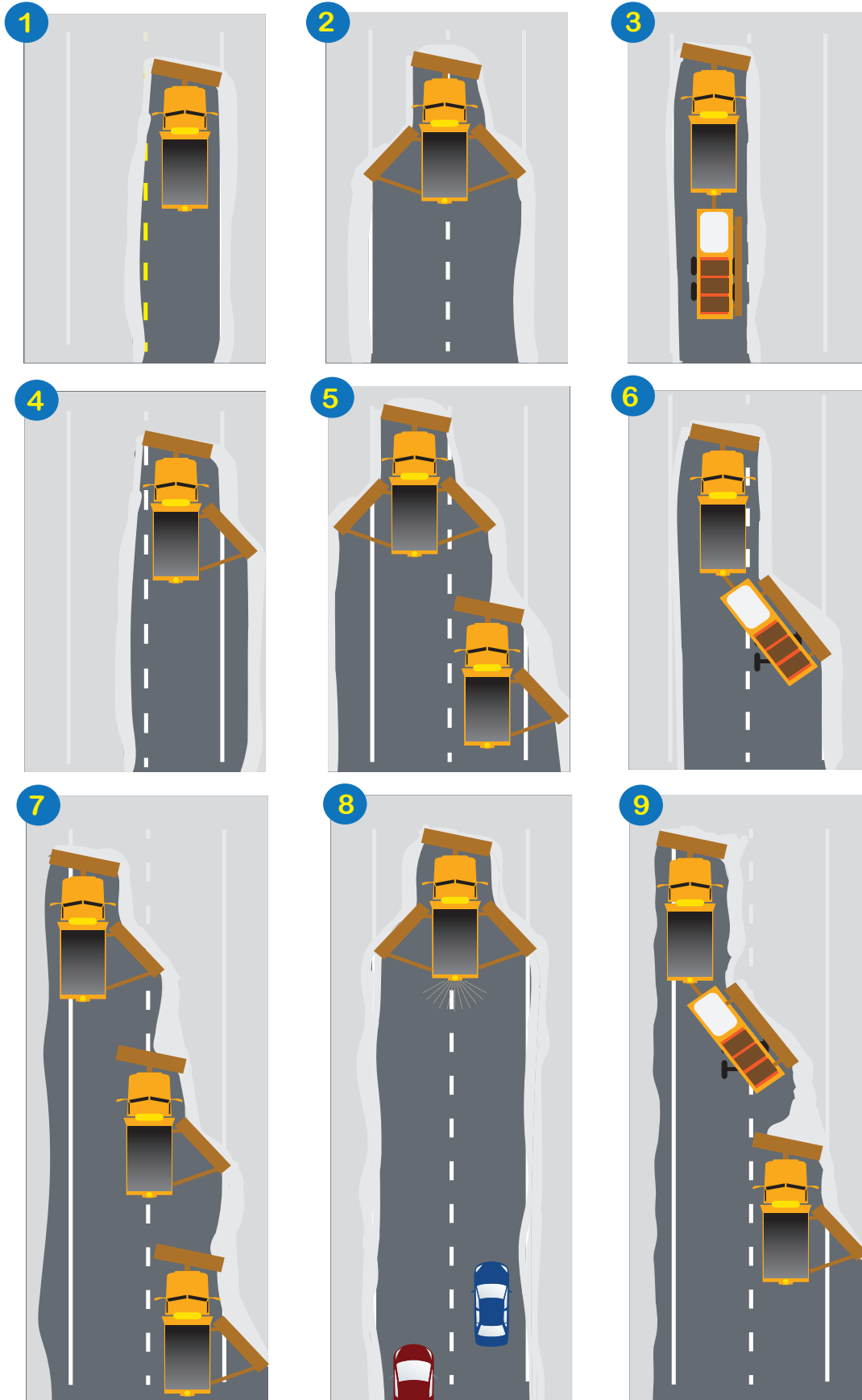


SNOWPLOW



Snowplow configurations you'll likely see

In ODOT's winter maintenance arsenal of trucks, graders, snow blowers and the like, the 10 yard dump truck with articulated front plow blade (1) is the premier work horse of the fleet. In most cases a twelve-foot-long right side plow blade (2) is added that can move into the adjacent lane or shoulder area to clear a combined total of about 18 feet of road width. (Note: all snow clearing widths are estimates that can vary, depending on actual length and angle of the plow blades.) Add a left side articulated plow blade to create a dual wing plow (2) and you can now clear up to 24 feet of snow in one operation.

Another option for clearing multiple lanes in one pass is to pull a tow plow behind the truck (3). These unique trailered machines have wheels that pivot, plus a 14-foot plow blade. They're also capable of distributing sanding rock, deicer or salt. When the tow plow trailer is engaged (6), it swings into the right lane of a two or more lane freeway. Combined with the truck's 12-foot-wide front plow blade, the tow plow equipped configuration can clear a massive 24-foot-wide path, similar to the dual wing behemoths.

While tow plows and dual wing plows have an impressive stretch, they can't alone clear all lanes and shoulders of I-84 at once. When that needs to happen in a hurry, a plow train (5) (7) (9) (10) (11) is formed with multiple vehicles working in tandem. The front plow runs in the left or passing lane, pushing snow to the right and in front of the plow behind, which pushes it further to the right. Sometimes more than two plows (7, 11) will be part of the team, helping to get as much snow and ice as possible moved off the road.

A few highway sections, such as Ladd Canyon and Cabbage Hill, have snow drift patterns where it's best to move excess snow into the freeway median, or as far left as possible. This is where it's real handy to have one or two dual wing plows in the mix, with the front plow angled towards the median and only the left wing plow blade dropped (10) (11) to direct everything further that direction.

Keeping safe around snow plows

When driving on wintery roads, please keep in mind the various types of plows you may encounter. It's against the law to pass a plow on the right in Oregon, and in some cases could be hazardous to pass on the left.

Plow drivers also have limited visibility with plows and flying snow obstructing their view. Stay at least three car lengths or more behind (8) and become familiar with their blind spots, as shown in the Snow Plow Safety graphic. They will eventually pull over and let you pass. Just remember, conditions in front of the plow will be worse. Always plan extra travel time and take it slow on slick winter highways.

