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PHL Airport Prepares for Region's First Major Snow Storm of 2016

PHILADELPHIA – As the Philadelphia region braces for this winter's first significant accumulation of snow this weekend, Philadelphia International Airport (PHL) is prepared to meet the challenges of clearing ice and snow from planes, runways, roadways and walkways.

PHL deploys up to 465 employees on its winter snow patrol to clear ice and snow from 37 million square feet of airfield surface, including runways, taxiways and aprons. In addition, the crew is responsible for plowing and salting 4.5 million square feet of arrival and departure roadways, I-95 ramps and parking lots in and around the Airport.

During a major winter storm event, PHL deploys more than 200 pieces of heavy equipment, including snow plows, backhoes, loaders, brooms, snow blowers and chemical trucks. PHL also has eight snow melters that can dissolve 4 million pounds of snow per hour.

In addition to the equipment, PHL has 300 tons of salt, 55,000 gallons of runway deicer and 195,000 gallons of aircraft deicer on hand.

In the 2014-15 season, the Airport used 7,500 tons of salt, 375,000 gallons of runway deicer and 664,200 gallons of aircraft deicer. So far this winter, there has been only one winter event that left just a trace of snow at PHL.

"We have hundreds of dedicated employees who are prepared to work to keep our Airport open and operating safely," said Airport CEO Chellie Cameron. "Also, we are prepared to offer hospitality to passengers who may be delayed for hours or even overnight."

Passengers planning to fly this weekend should check with their airlines for flight information. Some airlines are offering travelers with flight reservations this weekend the opportunity to change their itinerary without paying the customary change fees. Check with your carrier for details.

Travelers are encouraged to check the Airport's website, phl.org, and follow the Airport on Twitter @PHLAirport and the Philadelphia International Airport Facebook page for updates on Airport weather conditions and operations.