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Contact: Bob Wilson, CDOT Public Relations (303) 757-9431

## **PILOT PROGRAM DESIGNED TO QUICK CLEAR I-70 WEST**

**DENVER** – As part of its continuing goal to keep traffic moving and maintain safety along the Interstate 70 West corridor, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is beginning a pilot program this weekend to promptly clear trucks from the highway between Morrison Road and Vail.

“Truck incidents during peak travel periods causes traffic delays that can seriously impact trade, travel, tourism and recreation,” says CDOT Regional Transportation Director Jeff Kullman. “When we quickly clear the highway, it allows us to get traffic moving again in a timely manner.”

CDOT is contracting with American Towing Alliance, Inc. (ATA) to provide standby heavy wreckers at strategic locations along I-70 this winter, allowing commercial vehicles to be moved quickly from traffic lanes to a safe location during weekends, holidays and adverse weather.

“Similar programs have been successful when they’ve been implemented along other interstate corridors and we believe it should be tested here, especially along I-70,” added Kullman. “We’ll monitor it this winter, evaluate its effectiveness and if it’s successful, make any necessary improvements and incorporate them in a new contract for the 2008/2009 season.”

Coverage begins this weekend, Saturday, January 5 and Sunday, January 6, and it will continue each weekend through Sunday, April 6. Typical hours of operation are Saturdays from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. on westbound I-70 and Sundays from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. on eastbound I-70. Other coverage days include Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Monday, January 21) and President’s Day (February 18). Other days may be added for inclement weather if CDOT deems it necessary.

ATA’s Chief Operations Officer Chris Carlson is confident that the heavy tow program will have a positive effect on traffic flow. “The I-70 corridor between Vail and Denver is one of the most challenging stretches of freeway in the U.S. today. However, I’m certain that with the continued cooperation between CDOT, the Colorado State Patrol and ATA that this program will be successful.”

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