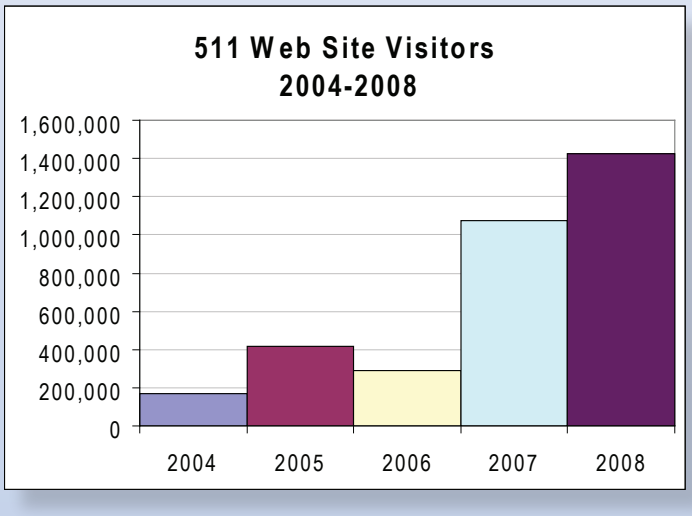
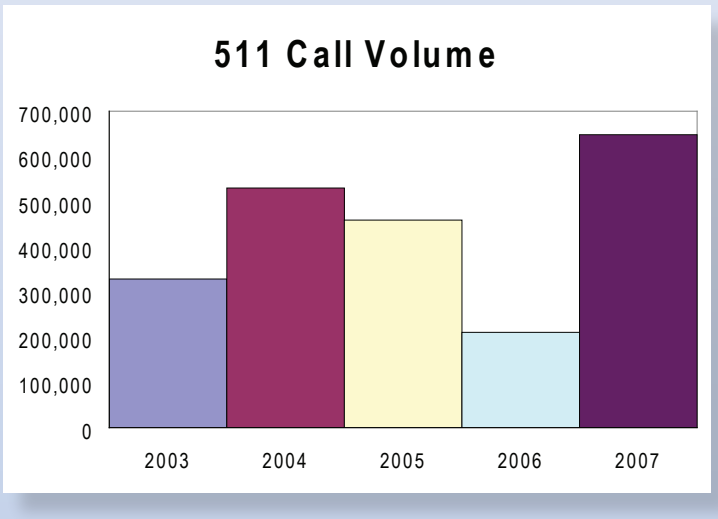
511 Travel Info

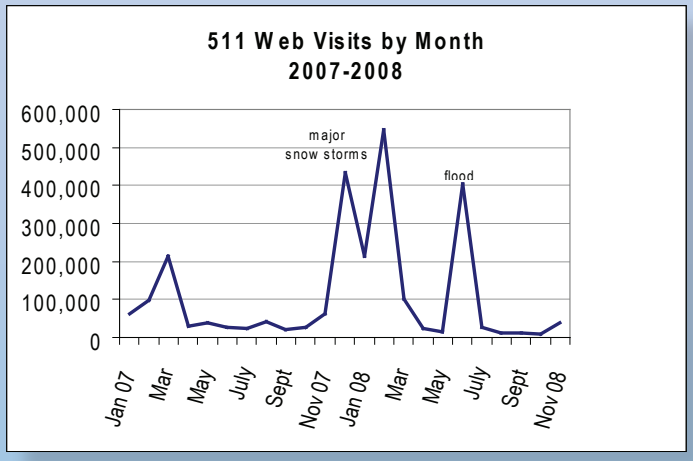
Iowa Department of Transportation

As the chart below indicates, the use of 511 has increased dramatically since its inception.



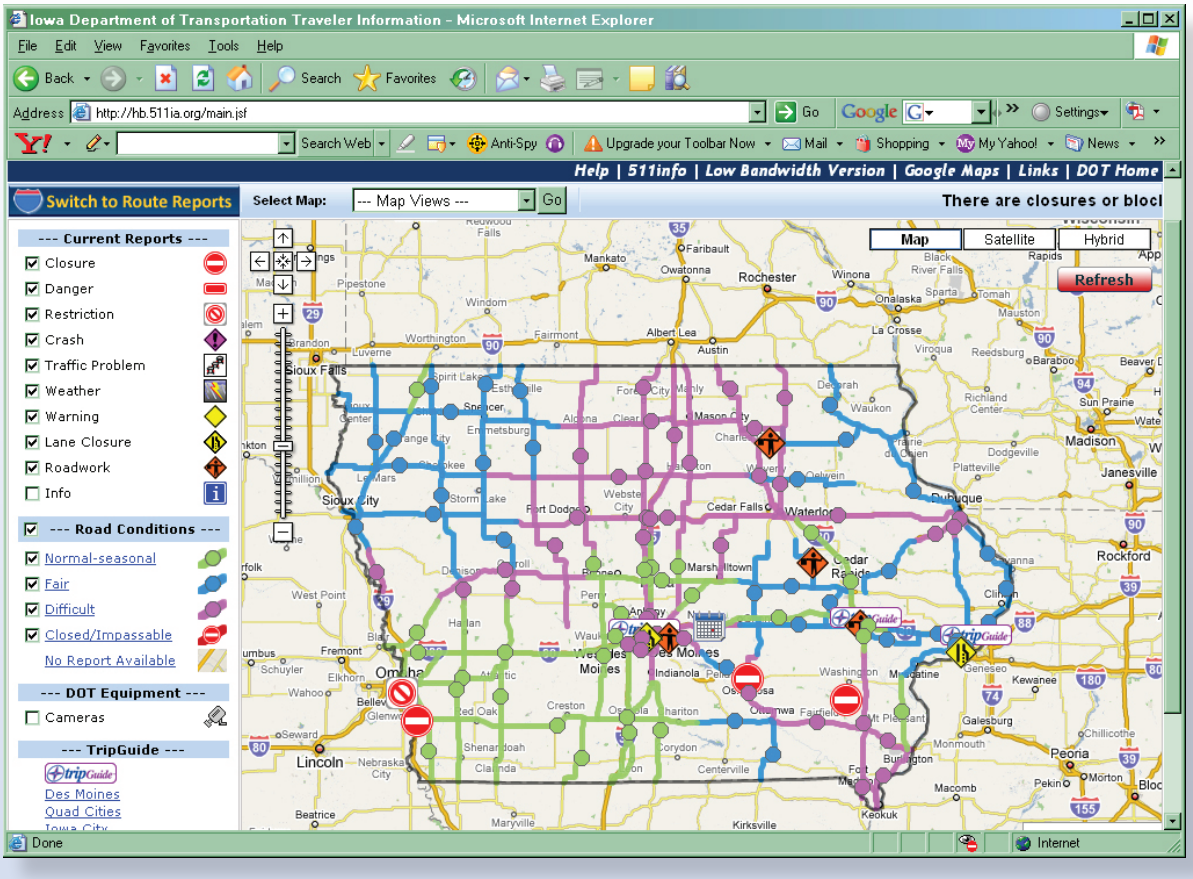


The 511 Web site experiences highest levels of use during periods of severe weather and prior to peak travel weekends. The monthly chart below clearly shows peak usage during the months of major snowstorms and the June 2008 floods.



The Iowa DOT's Travel Information Web site – **511ia.org** – is provided to help motorists make informed decisions about travel in Iowa. The Iowa DOT partners with the Iowa State Patrol for reporting weather-related road conditions from Nov. 15 through March 15.

Travel information can also be accessed by phone by dialing 511. This is an automated system with a computer-generated operator that helps the caller navigate through the voice-activated phone menu system. The 511 call system receives the highest use during severe weather and peak travel periods and has followed a trend similar to the Web site use.



High Bandwidth Site

Tips for using www.511ia.org:

- *ZOOM in on a region*
  Click on a region of the state for a closer view. Zoom regions are available on both high and low bandwidth sites for Northwestern Iowa, North Central Iowa, Northeastern Iowa, West Central Iowa, Central Iowa, East Central Iowa, Southwestern Iowa, South Central Iowa, Southeastern Iowa, Des Moines Metro, and several cities or metropolitan areas.

- *Selection information*
  On the left side of the page, check boxes to allow selection of various types of information with a legend to provide a key to the symbols on the map.

- *Pan and zoom*
  The Google™ based map allows pan and zoom functions to better view specific regions, highways or events. You can also click and drag anywhere on the map to pan the map to a new location.

CARS

CARS is a software system used to assemble traveler information and to support the dissemination of it to the public automatically through the 511 Web site and phone system, highway advisory radio/low power FM transmitters, and other media. CARS is supported by a consortium of states. Current members include Alaska, Idaho, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, the city of Calgary, Sacramento Council of Governments, New York Thruway, Indiana and New York. Participation in the CARS consortium allows Iowa to leverage its funds by partnering with other states to provide these services to the public.

tripGuide™

TripGuide™ allows users to view the actual traffic conditions in Des Moines, Iowa City and Quad Cities. Des Moines TripGuide has accounted for about 20 percent of 511 Web views since its implementation in 2005. The Iowa City and Quad Cities TripGuide pages went online in spring 2008. All TripGuide sites can be accessed from the main 511 page.