

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

TALKING POINTS

PIO inquiries: (804) 371-7215 Media inquiries: (804) 674-2400 Public inquiries: 211

Tuesday, February 17, 2015, 11 a.m.

Current Situation

- A significant winter storm impacted the commonwealth Monday through Tuesday morning. **The storm dropped up to 12 inches of snow in many parts of the state.**
- Temperatures are expected to be extremely cold for the next several days and **another cold front is expected to impact the state tomorrow.**
- **Many interstates and primary routes are in moderate to severe condition, meaning snow or icy patches likely cover major portions of the pavement.**

State Efforts

- Governor Terry McAuliffe declared a state of emergency at 3 p.m. yesterday, an action that authorizes state agencies to assist local governments in responding to the winter storm.
- In declaring a state of emergency, the governor authorizes state agencies to identify and position resources for quick response anywhere they are needed in Virginia. This action does not apply to individuals or private businesses.
- The Virginia Department of Emergency Management is coordinating conference calls between the National Weather Service, state agencies and local governments.
- The Virginia Emergency Operations Center has additional response team members to coordinate the state's response to the storm.
- The Virginia State Police are working 12-hour shifts and have additional troopers on patrol to expedite response times to traffic crashes and disabled motorists. **By 4 a.m. this morning, they had responded to 2,231 calls for service statewide; 825 traffic crashes and 620 disabled vehicles.**
- **One fatality has been attributed to the storm due to a crash in the northern region.**
- The Virginia National Guard has more than **125 personnel mobilized and staged to support response operations.**
- VDOT crews are out in force to treat and plow roads. **Crews are working in 12-hour shifts across the commonwealth.** Their goal is to have all state-maintained roads passable within 48 hours after the winter storm ends. It's important to remember that passable does not mean drivers will see bare pavement. **Once major routes are clear, VDOT can shift efforts to secondary roads and side streets.**
- VDOT will remain in close coordination with state and local police.
- In Northern Virginia, crews plow and treat interstates, major roads and neighborhoods concurrently. Residents can enter their address at www.vdotplows.org to see the status of plowing in their neighborhood.

Citizens Can Help ...

- Delay travel to allow VDOT to clear the roads. Get current road condition information by calling 511 or visiting www.511Virginia.org. Download the 511 mobile app to get the latest road condition information. If you must drive, wear a seatbelt.
- **You can also call 800-FOR-ROAD (800-367-7623) to report** road hazards or ask road-related questions at VDOT's 24-hour Customer Service Center.
- Have emergency supplies in your vehicle. If you are stranded you will need water, food, blankets, flashlight and extra batteries at a minimum. **See VDEM's video here:** <http://youtu.be/wPgvWgtiWHI>
- Continue to monitor local weather forecasts so you know how the storm is affecting your community; **temperatures are expected to fall due to another cold front on Wednesday.**

At Home:

- Bring pets inside from the cold.
- Be prepared to take care of yourself and your family for at least 72 hours, in case roads are blocked and/or there are power outages.
- Have a battery powered and/or hand-crank radio and extra batteries for emergency information. Listen to local weather forecasts and instructions from local officials.
- Always run generators outside in well-ventilated areas. Never use a portable generator in any enclosed or partially enclosed space.

Outdoors:

- Avoid overexertion while shoveling snow and cleaning up from the storm, no matter your age or physical condition. Shoveling snow or pushing a car can bring on a heart attack or make other medical conditions worse.
- Wear cold weather appropriate clothing like gloves/mittens, hats, scarves and snow boots. Dress in several layers of loose-fitting clothing and cover your face and mouth if possible.
- Be aware of the wind chill factor. Wind can cause body-heat loss.
- Stay dry, and if you become wet, head indoors and remove any wet clothing immediately.
- Limit your time outdoors.
- Make sure you monitor the time your children are out in the cold.
- Do not ignore shivering. It's an important first sign that the body is losing heat. Persistent shivering is a signal to return indoors.
- Check on others who might not be able to care for themselves.

Need Assistance:

- If you need help for an elderly or disabled person during the storm, need information on warming shelters or are concerned about an unsheltered individual or family, call 211. When you call 211, a trained professional will suggest sources of help using one of the largest databases of health and human services in your community and statewide.

Get winter weather preparedness information at www.ReadyVirginia.gov and download the Ready Virginia app for iPhones and Android devices.