

DUTCHESS COUNTY READY FOR NEXT WINTER STORM

Poughkeepsie... Dutchess County is under a Winter Storm Warning starting 7am Thursday morning 2/13 through 10am Friday morning 2/14. There is potential for snow accumulations of 8 to 14 inches. The Dutchess County Emergency Operations Center will be minimally activated beginning at 8am on Thursday morning to monitor storm conditions and coordinate resources as necessary. County facilities and offices will be open for normal operations.

Dutchess County Executive Marcus J. Molinaro said, "Winter weather has certainly been in full force this season and Dutchess County Government continues to respond to ensure public safety. We appreciate residents' continued cooperation for dealing with winter storm conditions with common sense and a focus on safety."

Dutchess County 911 Dispatch communication center is fully staffed, with additional staffing scheduled as the storm intensifies.

Dutchess County Public Transit (LOOP Bus Service) has announced that Dial-A-Ride and Flex services have been cancelled for Thursday, February 13, 2014. LOOP passengers should check for other potential schedule changes at www.dutchessny.gov/loop.htm. Service changes or cancellations will also be provided to local radio stations and other media outlets.

Dutchess County Office for the Aging volunteers provided additional meals were delivered to home delivered meal recipients earlier in the week in anticipation of storm conditions. Announcements about whether or not Senior Friendship Centers will open will be made tomorrow morning.

Dutchess County Public Works highway crews will be out in full force to address road conditions as snowfall accumulation increases. The County is fully stocked with salt and sand. Dutchess County is Drivers are encouraged to stay off the roads whenever possible to allow for crews to address storm conditions. The fewer vehicles on the road, the more effective the plowing operations will be. If you must travel, please keep the following safe winter driving tips in mind:

- The leading cause of death and injuries during winter storms is transportation accidents.

- When winter storms strike, do not drive unless necessary.
- Keep vehicles clear of ice and snow, including vehicle rooftops.
 - Do not attempt to stop a snowplow or obstruct its path. Plow trucks, when loaded with sand and salt, weigh approximately 30 tons. It is a significant load and requires all of the operator's attention. The large trucks are not as maneuverable and agile as a passenger vehicle and require extra time and distance to stop or avoid trouble.
 - When approaching snow removal equipment from the rear, travel a minimum of 200 feet behind the equipment to avoid being hit with sand or salt, and to allow for abrupt movements and changes in direction, including unexpected backing of the plow truck.
 - Use extreme caution when passing snow removal equipment. The truck operator's visibility is typically reduced due to the size and locations of various plow equipment mounted on the vehicle. It is advisable to not pass a plow truck.
 - If travel is a necessity, drivers should make sure their vehicle is stocked with survival gear such as blankets, a shovel, flashlight and extra batteries, extra warm clothing, set of tire chains, battery booster cables, quick energy foods and brightly-colored cloth to use as a distress flag.
- Vehicle gas tank should be kept full to prevent gasoline freeze-up.
- Drivers should be sure their cell phone battery is charged and with them whenever traveling.
- Make sure someone knows your travel plans.
- Listen to the local media reports and/or check www.511ny.org for the latest road conditions.
- Plan stops and keep more distance between cars. Always match speed to the road and weather conditions.
- Do not park or leave a vehicle unattended along the roadway during a snow or ice event. Parked vehicles are a hazard for snowplow operators, emergency responders and others.

For a wide variety of winter safety tips from protecting your home to being safe outdoors, check out the resources available on Dutchess County Government's website at

<http://www.co.dutchess.ny.us/countygov/departments/EmergencyResponse/12052.htm>

Residents can stay up to date on the County's storm response online at dutchessny.gov or on the County's social media pages on Facebook

at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Dutchess-County-Government/73646813346> or Twitter at

<http://twitter.com/DutchessCoGov>.

Information is also available by calling United Way 211.

#