

# UPDATE ON DUTCHESS COUNTY STORM RESPONSE

**Poughkeepsie...** Snow is falling heavily throughout the region and Dutchess County remains under Winter Storm Warning until 10am Friday morning 2/14. Snow accumulation predictions have been increased to 10 to 20 inches, with snow falling at rates of up to 3 inches per hour at times. The Dutchess County Emergency Operations Center is open and monitoring storm conditions to coordinate resources as necessary. County facilities and offices remain open, however the Inclement Weather Policy for county employees will be in effect from 12pm today (2/13) until 11am on Friday morning (2/14), so residents are encouraged to call in advance about specific services.

Dutchess County Executive Marcus J. Molinaro said, "County Government will continue to deal with the storm conditions to ensure public safety and we ask residents to also continue to use common sense and make decisions that protect themselves and their families."

**Dutchess County 911 Dispatch** communication center is fully staffed. 911 call volume has been light as many residents are heeding storm warning and avoiding travel on roadways.

**Dutchess County Public Transit (LOOP Bus Service)** will be suspending all service effective 1pm today. Dial-A-Ride and Flex services had been previously cancelled. Passengers should check [www.dutchessny.gov/loop.htm](http://www.dutchessny.gov/loop.htm) for information about service on Friday, February 14<sup>th</sup>. Service changes or cancellations will also be provided to local radio stations and other media outlets.

**Dutchess County Office for the Aging** Senior Friendship Centers are closed Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup> and Friday, February 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Dutchess County Public Works** highway crews has been 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](http://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](http://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.

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