

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
#15-17

**NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ISSUES HAZARDOUS TRAVEL ADVISORY
FOR TUESDAY MARCH 14**

Blizzard Watch in effect from late Monday night through late Tuesday night

*Heavy snow and strong winds will create dangerous travel conditions; Alternate Side Parking
Regulations suspended Tuesday and Wednesday*

March 12, 2017 – The New York City Emergency Management Department today issued a hazardous travel advisory for Tuesday, March, 14, 2017. The National Weather Service has issued a Blizzard Watch in effect from late Monday night through late Tuesday night. A nor'easter is forecast to bring heavy snow along with strong and potentially damaging winds that will create hazardous travel conditions on Tuesday.

“We’re preparing for a significant storm on Tuesday, and New Yorkers should also prepare for snow and dangerous road conditions,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “Besides the snow, it will be cold. We urge you to avoid unnecessary travel and help keep roads clear for Sanitation crews and first responders.”

“Heavy snow will make travel difficult on Tuesday. New Yorkers should avoid driving and use mass transit when possible,” said **NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito**. “We are working closely with our agency partners to coordinate the City’s preparations for the storm.”

A low pressure system develops off of the Carolina coastline Monday before making its way up the East Coast late Monday night. According to the latest forecast, light snow is expected to begin late Monday night, and will intensify overnight into early Tuesday morning. The heaviest snowfall is expected Tuesday morning through the afternoon, with rates as much as 2 to 4 inches per hour possible. Strong winds are expected to accompany the heavy snowfall, with wind speeds 20 – 30 mph, and gusts 35 – 50 mph, creating hazardous travel conditions. The snowfall is expected to taper off Tuesday evening. A total accumulation of 12 to 18 inches is anticipated, but locally higher amounts are possible. New Yorkers should avoid driving and use mass transit where possible on Tuesday.

New York City Emergency Management also urged New Yorkers of the potential for widespread minor to locally moderate coastal flooding during the Tuesday morning high tide cycle. The National Weather Service has issued a Coastal Flood Watch from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Tuesday for areas near the coastline in Brooklyn and Staten Island, and areas along the southern shores of Queens. Minor to moderate flooding of the most vulnerable shore roads and/or properties is possible. Coastal residents should be alert for updates and take action to protect property.

NYC Emergency Management also reminded New Yorkers to prepare for extremely cold temperatures Tuesday and Wednesday. Temperatures Tuesday are expected to be in the upper twenties, with lows Tuesday night in the low twenties. Temperatures are forecast to be at or around freezing on Wednesday.

Snow Preparations

DSNY

The New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY) is pre-deploying 689 salt spreaders across the five boroughs. PlowNYC will be activated and more than 1600 plows will be dispatched when more than two inches of snow accumulates.

DSNY will assign 2,400 workers per shift. Workers will be assigned to 12 hour shifts beginning at 7 a.m. Monday.

DSNY has 283,000 tons of rock salt available.

Garbage/recycling collections will be suspended once snow operations begin.

DOT

Alternate Side Parking is suspended Tuesday, March 14, and Wednesday, March 15, to facilitate snow removal operations. Parking meters are in effect.

DOT will deploy crews to pre-treat pedestrian overpasses and step streets, and ensure that ferry terminals and municipal parking garages are pre-salted in advance of any snow.

During snow operations, DOT typically deploys more than 400 personnel and more than 100 pieces of equipment, including nearly 80 trucks for plowing over several shifts.

The Staten Island Ferry is expected to run on a normal schedule, but all passengers should allow extra time should weather conditions impact the schedule.

Citi Bike service is expected to remain in service until further notice.

NYC Emergency Management

NYC Emergency Management is working closely with the National Weather Service to monitor the storm's track to determine the impacts to New York City.

NYC Emergency Management has begun hosting daily interagency conference calls with City and state agencies and public and private partners to coordinate the City's preparations for the storm.

NYC Emergency Management's Emergency Operations Center will be activated Monday evening to coordinate the City's response to the storm's impacts.

NYC Emergency Management has begun extensive outreach to elected officials with the latest information regarding the storm's track and potential impact to the City.

Homeless Services

A Code Blue Weather Emergency notice is issued when the temperature drops to 32 degrees Fahrenheit or less between 4 p.m. and 8 a.m., including National Weather Service calculations for wind chill values. No one who is homeless and seeking shelter in New York City during a Code Blue will be denied. Should you see a homeless individual out in the cold, please call 311 and an outreach team will be dispatched to offer assistance. Code Blue Weather Emergencies include the following options for the homeless:

- **Shelters:** During a Code Blue, shelter is available system-wide to accommodate anyone who is reasonably believed to be homeless and is brought to a shelter by outreach teams. Accommodations are also available for walk-ins.
- **Drop-in centers:** All drop-in centers are open 24-hours per day when Code Blue procedures are in effect and will assist as many people as possible for the duration of the emergency. Drop-in staff can also make arrangements for homeless individuals at other citywide facilities.
- **Safe havens and stabilization beds:** Chronically homeless individuals may be transported directly to these low-threshold housing options.
- **Street homeless outreach:** Teams will contact vulnerable individuals on their Code Blue Priority Lists a minimum of once every four (4) hours beginning at 8 p.m. during Code Blue Alerts and once every two (2) hours beginning at 8 p.m. for Enhanced Code Blue Alerts to encourage them to accept transport to a safe place. DHS coordinates borough-level Code Blue efforts directly with agencies such as NYPD, DSNY, and the Parks Department.

Travel Safety Tips

For Motorists

- Use mass transportation whenever possible. If you must drive a vehicle, monitor weather and traffic reports for the latest road conditions.
- Drive slowly. Posted speed limits are for ideal weather conditions. Vehicles take longer to stop on snow and ice than on dry pavement.
- Use major streets or highways for travel whenever possible.
- Four-wheel drive vehicles may make it easier to drive on snow-covered roads, but they do not stop quicker than other vehicles.
- Keep the name and phone number of at least one local towing service in your vehicle in case you break down or become stuck in snow.

- If you get stuck on the road, stay with your vehicle and contact a towing company.

For Pedestrians

- Exercise caution and avoid slippery surfaces; some ice may not be visible.
- Wear layers including a hat, gloves/mittens, and a scarf to stay protected from the cold.
- Keep clothes and shoes dry, if a layer becomes wet, remove it.
- Keep fingertips, earlobes, and noses covered if you go outside.
- Have heightened awareness of cars, particularly when approaching or crossing intersections.
- Wear sturdy boots that provide traction to reduce slipping. Use handrails when using stairs.
- Seniors should take extra care outdoors to avoid slips and falls from icy conditions.

Coastal Flooding Preparations

NYC residents living in coastal areas expected to experience minor or moderate coastal flooding should take the following preparedness steps:

- Learn the safest route from your home or workplace to safe, high ground in case you have to evacuate. This should be part of your household emergency plan.
- Prepare a Go Bag that you can grab in case you need to leave your home in a hurry.
- If you live in a flood-susceptible area, keep materials, such as sandbags, plywood, plastic sheeting, and lumber, on hand to help protect your home.
- Stay informed. Before and during an emergency, the City will send emergency alerts and updates to New Yorkers through various channels.
- If you have to walk in water, walk where the water is not moving or use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.
- Stay out of any building if it is surrounded by floodwaters.
- When outside, avoid walking and driving through flooded areas. As few as six inches of moving water can knock a person over. Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars, causing loss of control and possible stalling. One or two feet of water can carry away a vehicle.

Safe Home Heating Tips

Improper use of portable heating equipment can lead to fire or dangerous levels of carbon monoxide. Take precautions to ensure you are heating your home safely.

Fire safety tips:

- Make sure you have a working smoke alarm in every room. Test them at least once a month and change the batteries twice a year.

- Use only portable heating equipment that is approved for indoor use. Space heaters are temporary heating devices and should only be used for a limited time each day.
- Keep combustible materials, including furniture, drapes, and carpeting at least three feet away from the heat source. Never drape clothes over a space heater to dry them.
- Never leave running space heaters unattended, especially around children. Always keep an eye on heating equipment. Turn it off when you are unable to closely monitor it.
- Plug space heaters directly into a wall outlet. Never use an extension cord or power strip. Do not plug anything else into the same outlet when the space heater is in use. Do not use space heaters with frayed or damaged cords.
- If you are going to use an electric blanket, only use one that is less than 10 years old from the date of purchase. Also avoid tucking the electric blanket in at the sides of the bed. Only purchase blankets with an automatic safety shut-off.

Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning:

- Carbon monoxide comes from the burning of fuel. Therefore, make sure all fuel-burning devices such as furnaces, boilers, hot water heaters, and clothes dryers are properly vented to the outdoors and operating properly. If you are not sure, contact a professional to inspect and make necessary repairs.
- Make sure you have a working carbon monoxide detector. Most homes and residential buildings in New York City are required by law to have carbon monoxide detectors installed near all sleeping areas. Owners are responsible for installing approved carbon monoxide detectors. Occupants are responsible for keeping and maintaining the carbon monoxide detectors in good repair.
- If you have a working fireplace, keep chimneys clean and clear of debris.
- Never heat your home with a gas stove or oven, charcoal barbecue grill, kerosene, propane, or oil-burning heaters. Kerosene heaters and propane space heaters are illegal in New York City.
- The symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are non-specific and include headache, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, sleepiness, trouble breathing, and loss of consciousness. Severe poisonings may result in permanent injury or death.

If a carbon monoxide detector goes off in your home get outside immediately and call 911. If you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning, get outside immediately and call 911.

For more winter weather safety tips, visit NYC.gov/EmergencyManagement. New Yorkers are also encouraged to sign up for Notify NYC, the City's free, official emergency notification system. Through Notify NYC, New Yorkers can receive phone calls, text messages, and/or email alerts about winter weather conditions and other emergencies. To sign up for Notify NYC, call 311, visit NYC.gov/notifynyc, or follow @NotifyNYC on Twitter.



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