

For Immediate Release

#2-18

**NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ISSUES HAZARDOUS TRAVEL ADVISORY
FOR THURSDAY, JANUARY 4**

Winter Storm Watch in effect late Wednesday through Thursday evening

*Alternate Side Parking Regulations are suspended Thursday and Friday;
Parking meters remain in effect*

January 3, 2018 – The New York City Emergency Management Department today issued a hazardous travel advisory for Thursday, January 4, 2018. The National Weather Service has issued a Winter Storm Watch for New York City in effect from late Wednesday through Thursday evening. Snow is forecast to begin around midnight Thursday, with the heaviest snow expected to fall during the morning commute. Snow is expected to end Thursday evening. A total of 3 to 6 inches of snow is forecast, with higher amounts possible. High winds are also forecast Thursday, with 15 mph to 25 mph sustained, and gusts as high as 35 mph to 40 mph. The National Weather Service has also issued a Coastal Flood Advisory in effect from 9 a.m. to 12 noon Thursday for vulnerable locations along the shorelines of Staten Island and Southern Queens.

A Winter Storm Watch means there is potential for significant snow, sleet or ice accumulations that may impact travel. New Yorkers should prepare for snow covered roads and limited visibilities, as high winds can cause blowing and drifting snow. Commuters are advised to use mass transit where possible, and to exercise caution when driving, walking or biking.

Alternate Side Parking regulations are suspended Thursday and Friday to facilitate snow removal. Payment at parking meters will remain in effect throughout the city.

NYC Emergency Management also advised New Yorkers to prepare for cold temperatures, as the arctic air continues Thursday. Temperatures are forecast to be in the upper 20s Thursday, with wind chill values between 10 and 15 degrees. Temperatures Thursday night will be in the low teens, with wind chill values as low as minus 5 degrees. Cold weather can cause or worsen health problems. Certain individuals, including the unsheltered homeless, people with disabilities and those with access and functional needs are at an increased risk for injuries, illness or death. Others at an increased risk also include people who drink heavily or use drugs and become incapacitated outdoors, or those who live in homes without heat, and:

- Are 65 years of age or older.
- Are infants.
- Have certain medical conditions such as heart or lung disease, high blood pressure, diabetes.
- Have serious mental health conditions or developmental disabilities.

- Have disabilities or access and functional needs (e.g. limited mobility, trouble leaving home).

New York City agencies are taking a number of measures to prepare for the upcoming storm:

NYC Emergency Management

- The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be activated Thursday evening to coordinate the City's response to the storm.
- 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 is hosting daily interagency conference calls with city and state agencies and public and private partners to coordinate the City's preparations for the storm.

Department of Sanitation

- The NYC Department of Sanitation is pre-deploying 693 salt spreaders. PlowNYC will be activated and 1500 plows will be dispatched when more than two inches of snow accumulates, with additional plows available if necessary.
- DSNY will assign 2,300 workers per shift. Workers will be assigned to 12-hour shifts beginning at 7 p.m. Wednesday.
- Garbage/recycling collections will be suspended once snow operations begin.

Department of Transportation

- DOT will deploy resources to assist DSNY with snow removal.
- DOT's Bridges Division will pre-deploy crews to East River Bridges.
- Municipal Parking lots will be monitored and conditions will be addressed as needed.
- DOT's Arterial, Parking and Citywide Concrete Units, will pre-treat pedestrian overpasses, muni lots and step streets.
- DOT's Ferry Division will pre-treat and clear walkways at the ferry terminal. Ferry passengers are advised to allow extra time for travel Thursday.
- Crews from JC Decaux will pre-treat bus shelters.
- DOT will monitor conditions on the citywide Transportation network at the Joint Transportation Management Center with State DOT and NYPD, and coordinate efforts to address any issues.

Department of Social Services

A Code Blue Weather Emergency notice is issued when the temperature is forecast to drop 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 an individual who appears to be

homeless and in need out in the cold, please call 311 and an outreach team will be dispatched to offer assistance. During Code Blue Weather emergencies, experienced outreach teams work to connect homeless New Yorkers with the following resources:

- **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, including when Code Blue procedures are in effect, and will assist as many people as possible for the duration of the emergency. Drop-in staff and the dedicated outreach teams they work closely with each and every day 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 programs.
- **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 services, including transportation to a shelter placement. DSS coordinates borough-level Code Blue efforts directly with partner City agencies, including but not limited to NYPD, DSNY, and the Parks Department.

Department of Buildings

- DOB issued a weather advisory reminding property owners, contractors and crane operators to take precautionary measures and secure their construction sites, buildings, and equipment during high winds.
- The Department will be performing random spot-check inspections of construction sites around the City. If sites are not secured, the Department will take immediate enforcement action — issuing violations and Stop Work Orders, where necessary.

To safeguard construction sites, builders, contractors, and developers should take all precautionary measures including but not limited to the following:

- Tie down and secure material and loose debris at construction sites.
- Cover electrical equipment from exposure to the weather.
- Store loose tools, oil cans, and extra fuses in a tool box.
- Secure netting, scaffolding, and sidewalk sheds.
- Suspend crane operations and secure crane equipment when wind speeds reach 30 mph or greater.
- Suspend hoist operations and secure exterior hoists when wind speeds reach 35 mph or greater, unless manufacturer specifications state otherwise.
- Brace and secure construction fences.
- Call 911 if there is an emergency on a construction site.

To secure a building, property owners should take all precautionary measures including but not limited to the following:

- Bring inside loose, lightweight objects such as lawn furniture, potted plants, garbage cans, garden tools, and toys.
- Anchor objects that would be unsafe outside, such as gas grills or propane tanks.
- Close up and secure patio umbrellas.
- Secure retractable awnings.
- Remove aerial antennas and satellite television dishes.
- Buildings Bulletin 2015-029 outlines the requirements for vertical netting, debris netting and material-fall protection devices at buildings and construction sites.

Strong winds may cause power outages.

Before an outage:

- Charge cell phones.
- Gather supplies.
- Turn refrigerator/freezers to a colder setting.

During an outage:

- Stay clear of downed power lines
- Turn off all appliances
- Keep refrigerator/freezer doors closed
- Do not use generators indoors.
- If you have a disability/access needs, or use Life Sustaining Equipment (LSE) and need immediate assistance, dial 911.

NYC Parks

- NYC Parks asks park patrons not to walk on waterbodies (frozen or partially), and asks that they be careful when walking near them as edges can become obscured during snowfall. For safety, signage and ice ladder stations are posted around all water bodies in City parks.
- Parks will support the DSNY street plowing operation, lending 44 plows with operators.
- Parks staff will prepare over 115 plow vehicles, 150 salt spreaders and other equipment for snow removal on park perimeters.

Winter Storm Safety Tips

For Motorists

- Use mass transit where possible. If you have to drive, drive slowly. Vehicles take longer to stop on snow and ice than on dry pavement.
- Four-wheel drive vehicles may make it easier to drive on snow-covered roads, but they do not stop quicker than other vehicles.
- Use major streets or highways for travel whenever possible.
- Know your vehicle's braking system. Vehicles with anti-lock brakes require a different braking technique than vehicles without anti-lock brakes in snowy conditions.
- If you are driving and begin to skid, ease your foot off the gas and steer in the direction you want the front of the car to go. Straighten the wheel when the car moves in the desired direction. If you have an anti-lock braking system (ABS), apply steady pressure to the brake pedal. Never pump the brakes on an ABS equipped vehicle.
- Try to keep your vehicle's gas tank as full as possible.
- Keep the name and phone number of at least one local towing service in your car in case you break down or become stuck.

For Pedestrians

- Exercise caution and avoid slippery surfaces; some ice may not be visible. 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.
- Have heightened awareness of cars, particularly when approaching or crossing intersections.
- If you have to go outdoors, wear dry, warm clothing and cover exposed skin. Keep fingertips, earlobes, and noses covered. Wear a hat, hood, scarf, and gloves.
- Shivering is an important first sign that the body is losing heat. Shivering is a signal to return indoors.
- Be careful when shoveling snow. Follow your doctor's advice if you have heart disease or high blood pressure. Cold weather puts an extra strain on the heart.
- Be safe at work. Workers who spend a lot of time outdoors are at risk for cold-related health impacts. If you are an employer, implement safe work practices, provide appropriate protective equipment, and train workers on how to stay safe during cold and winter weather.
- Limit alcohol intake. Drinking alcohol may make you feel warmer but it causes your body to lose heat faster. Alcohol also impairs your judgment which limits your ability to take appropriate precautions or remove yourself from a dangerously cold environment in time. As a result, alcohol actually increases your chances of hypothermia and frostbite.

Prolonged exposure to cold can lead to hypothermia, frostbite, and can worsen existing medical conditions such as heart and lung diseases.

Hypothermia occurs when the body temperature drops to a dangerously low level. It can lead to death. Symptoms include:

- Intense shivering
- Dizziness
- Trouble speaking
- Lack of coordination
- Sluggishness
- Drowsiness
- Confusion
- Shallow breathing

Frostbite occurs when parts of the body freeze, such as finger, toes, ears, nose, and cheeks. It can cause permanent damage. Symptoms include:

- Red or painful skin
- Pale skin
- Unusually firm or waxy skin
- Numbness

Call 911 and follow instructions, or go to the emergency room if you see symptoms of hypothermia or frostbite.

Fire Safety

- 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.

- Keep fireplace 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 fire safety information, visit FDNYsmart.org.

Coastal Flooding

Coastal residents should be alert for updates and take action to protect property. NYC residents living in coastal areas expected to experience minor or moderate coastal flooding should take the following preparedness steps:

- Prepare a Go Bag that you can grab in case you need to leave your home in a hurry.
- 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.
- If you live in a flood-prone 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, including Notify NYC. To sign up for Notify NYC, download the [free mobile application](#), visit NYC.gov/NotifyNYC, call 311, or follow @NotifyNYC on Twitter.

For more information, visit nyc.gov/emergencymanagement. New Yorkers are encouraged to sign up for Notify NYC, the City's free emergency communications program. To sign up for Notify NYC, download the [free mobile application](#), visit NYC.gov/NotifyNYC, call 311, or follow @NotifyNYC on Twitter.

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