

February 21, 2013

News Release

For Immediate Release

Storm Preparations and Response

The City of Springfield and Greene County Public Safety departments prepared for the worst and hoped for the best as an icy blast made its way toward the Ozarks Feb. 21, 2013. As of Thursday morning, the Springfield-Greene County Office of Emergency Management continues to monitor the potential hazards and is already activated at a Level 3 status.

"Right now we are in 'wait and see' mode," explains director Ryan Nicholls. Level 3 is typically a "monitoring" phase. If needed, notification will be made to those state agencies and emergency support functions which would need to take action as part of their everyday responsibilities.

The City's Public Works Department has been on duty for the storm since 10 p.m. Wednesday. Crews pre-treated main streets early and got ahead of the initial sleet. Main roads this morning are in good shape with a few slick spots over bridges, according to Public Works Director Phil Broyles.

Today, crews will continue to apply salt as needed, with main problems expected to be on residential streets. Motorists will face better road conditions once they reach more heavily traveled streets.

Public Works changed crews at 10 a.m. and will stay on 12-hour shifts until the storm is over. "We are expecting mainly freezing rain and sleet the remainder of the day."

As always, City officials ask citizens to stay home if at all possible.

Zim Schwartz, director of Springfield/Greene County Emergency Communications, reminds citizens to use good judgment when deciding to call 9-1-1.

"Particularly in the event of a severe weather situation, if you need Police, Fire or EMS, use a common sense approach in deciding when to call. We want to make sure we have resources available for those true emergencies," Schwartz said.

The Police and Fire Departments are currently on emergency status. When emergency status is in effect, citizens reporting motor vehicle accidents will be instructed to make a walk-in accident report if the following conditions exist:

- All vehicles involved are operable
- The accident is non-injury
- No alcohol/drug-impaired driver is involved

For those involved in an accident where vehicles are drivable and there are no injuries, SPD recommends the following:

Exchange the following information:

- Names
- Contact Information
- Phone and or Address
- Vehicle Information
- Make, model, license
- Insurance Information
- Insurance Company
- Policy Number
- Time of accident

"If you don't have some way to write down information, you can always take a picture of the vehicle, vehicle license number and insurance card with a camera phone," says Lt. Ben King.

In the event of a hit-and-run situation, get as much information as possible:

- Description of vehicle
- License plate number
- Description of the driver
- Contact information if there were any other witnesses to the incident

To file a Walk-In Accident Report:

Springfield Police Department Headquarters, 321 E. Chestnut Expressway, 7 a.m. – 11 p.m., seven days a week

South Station, 2620 W. Battlefield, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The Fire Department is also in emergency status, which means a smaller number of units are sent to each call to preserve units for anticipated increased call load.

Snow plows are staged and ready, and the Urban Search and Rescue trailer/support vehicle is secured for response. The Fire Department technical rescue team is also briefed and ready.

City Utilities

The 24-hour response center is operational, with only one reported outage affecting six customers, as of 9:30 a.m. Thursday.

Follow the City's social media sites for up-to-the-minute information. A complete listing of those sites is at www.springfieldmo.gov/follow.

For more information, contact Cora Scott at 417-864-1009 or 417-380-3352.