



January 6, 2025 Winter Storm City Council Work Session

Thursday, February 27th, 2025

Winter Tune Up



- Annual training with department leadership held on November 13th, 2024
- Conducted by OEM and DPW
- This training reviews the current snow plan, lessons learned from previous year, and departmental responsibilities.

Snow Emergency Response Plan Winter Weather Tune Up 2024

Bob Couchenour, Public Works Services Superintendent
Dave Mandell, Deputy Director of Emergency Management

What Happened?



- All jurisdictions in Maryland expected to be impacted by forecast. Gov. Moore declared State of Emergency.
- Extreme cold (extended duration) and 8-12” of snow forecasted for Annapolis area.
- Annapolis received 9.5 inches of snow - the most snowfall in a 24-hour period for Annapolis since January 2022.
- Temperatures dropped to 25 degrees; the lowest windchill was 17 degrees.
- City activated the EOC and began preparing for the forecast on January 3rd.
- Response operations started at the start of the snowfall



High Level Overview



January 3rd - January 5th

Preparedness Activities



EOC: Activated to Enhanced

- Coordination Calls/SWEM Calls
- Special Assistance Roster
- Call Center Activated



Warming Center Activated

- Extended operations



Public Information Efforts

- Press Releases
- AlertAnnapolis/Prepare Me App
- Social Media



Departmental Preparations

- Varying Activities by Department

January 6th

Response Activities



Snow Operations - Phase 2 Declared

- Salting
- Snow Removal - Roads
- SnowPaths Deployment
- Opened City Garages



EOC: Increased to Partial

- In-person EOC Representatives
- Continued EOC Operations
- Continued Call Center Operations



Gov't Status Jan 6: CLOSED



Public Information Continued

- Press Releases
- AlertAnnapolis/Prepare Me App
- Social Media

Post Snowfall: January 7th - January 8th

Recovery Activities



Continued Snow Operations



Public Information Continued

- Press Releases
- AlertAnnapolis/Prepare Me App
- Social Media



Gov't Status Jan 7: DELAYED 2-HR Gov't Status Jan 8: Normal



EOC Jan 7: Partial

EOC Jan 8: Returned to NORMAL

Snow Operations



- Operations: Salting, brining, plowing, and removal
- Phase 2 declared on January 6th at 6:15AM
- Snow Emergency Benchmarks - Phase 2
 - Emergency routes passable within 30 hours
 - Connector routes passable within 42 hours
 - Remaining Routes passable within 66 hours



Departments: DPW, Rec & Parks, OEM/EOC

Snow Operations



What Went Well

- Met benchmarks for Emergency Routes and Connector Routes.
- Responsive to feedback on snow concerns reported from Call Center, “Report and Issue” portal, and EOC.
- EOC and Senior Policy Group collaborated effectively to solve issues and make decisions.

Areas of Improvement

- Aggressive salting based on snowfall type and totality of circumstances
- Updated version of Snow Emergency Plan was not posted online
- Restructure phases of Snow Emergency Plan
- Ensuring streets are consistently labeled as Emergency, Connector, or “Other” route (example: Cedar Park Rd)
- Coordination with DGS on City roads in the State Complex for snow removal

Parking and Towing



Garages were opened to the public (free of charge) to support plowing of emergency snow routes; During Phase 2, cars on Emergency routes may be towed.

What Went Well

- Before cars were towed APD made an effort to find the owners.
- Majority of streets were cleared

Areas of Improvement

- Managing expectations of the public - aggressive towing vs reasonable towing
- Clarify public messaging (residents didn't know they could leave garage early, residents concerned about being towed if they put car back on the street before free garage ends)

Departments: Police, Transportation, PIOs

Sidewalks



What Went Well

- Residents overall complying with clearing sidewalks
- If there was a sidewalk safety concern, Rec & Parks stepped up and supported sidewalk clearing (in addition to their normal snow emergency duties).

Areas of Improvement

- Public complaints and questions regarding sidewalks (responsibility, enforcement, elderly, etc).
- Educating the public on their responsibilities per City Code
- Establishing responsibility can be complex, especially when we're talking about non-City roads

Departments: Planning and Zoning, Public Works, Recreation & Parks, and PIOs

SnowPaths



First MAJOR storm using SnowPaths in Annapolis

What Went Well

- SnowPaths received generally good feedback outside of the technical error.

Areas of Improvement

- Internal technical user error led to disruption of public-facing usage of the SnowPaths system (appearance of roads not being plowed, timeframes of last plow, etc.)
- Additional features should be added to support operations (completion percentage of each route by type vs zone)
- Confusion on reporting feedback on the SnowPaths system itself vs “reporting an issue” regarding snow concern to DPW.
- Do we need to add an additional status level to show between 1-2 hours?

Departments: Public Works

Warming Center



- Stanton Center activates as an emergency temporary overnight warming center when required.
- When weather reaches potentially dangerous and deadly temperatures, day time activation may be necessary. There are 2 options:
- **Option 1:** Extend warming center hours at Stanton (24+ hours) if available
- **Option 2:** If Stanton is unavailable, OEM will work with the (1) Light House Shelter to host patrons during the daytime (wash clothes, meals, and shower) and (2) with ADOT to provide transportation resources to/from shelter and Stanton Center.



"No one dies from exposure on the streets of Annapolis."



Light House
A HOMELESS PREVENTION
SUPPORT CENTER

CRS
Crisis Response System

Departments: OEM, Rec & Parks, Public Works, Transportation, and Police

EOC Operations



EOC was activated 24/7 from January 3rd until January 8th.

What Went Well

- Preparedness activities (coordination calls, council briefings, statewide calls, internal City calls, etc.)
- Government status (right call on operating status made at the right time)
- Resource requests tracked and fulfilled appropriately.
- Call Center operations

Areas of Improvement

- Need EOC representative training (EOC bootcamp)
- Streamline call center(s) and constituent services concerns
- Strengthen communication with employees

Departments: OEM, Fire, Police, Public Works, and Transportation

Public Information



What Went Well

- Timely and thorough messaging based on the forecasts and information available at the time (9 Press Releases, 15+ Social Media posts, 7 media interviews).
- Coordination with media to amplify messaging.

Areas of Improvement

- Create social media posts that explain plowing practices (not just passable standard, but why we do it in the way we do it).
- Set expectations for timelines on snow removal, especially the anticipated time to complete neighborhood streets.

Departments: PIOs

Thank You!