

GEORGE LATIMER, Westchester County Executive

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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LARGE SNOW STORM PROJECTED TO HIT WESTCHESTER STARTING TONIGHT **County Executive Latimer Urges Residents to Take Precautions in Advance**

(White Plains, NY) – With significant snowfall forecasted for Westchester beginning tonight and continuing through the day tomorrow, County Executive George Latimer is urging residents to take precautions to be prepared for the storm.

The storm is projected to make travel difficult, particularly during the morning rush hours, and may also lead to downed wires, fallen trees and power outages. As much as nine to 12 inches of snow is possible, particularly in northern Westchester.

Latimer said residents should replenish food stocks and other supplies before the arrival of the severe weather to avoid having to be out once the storm arrives.

Latimer said: “We are New Yorkers. We have lived through a lot of winters already. This nothing new, but the bottom line is that we still have to be prepared for it. I can’t emphasize enough to plan ahead.”

At a news briefing this afternoon, Latimer said residents should:

- Stay home during the storm and avoid driving, if possible;
- Check with your airline for any cancellations or delays if you are scheduled to fly from Westchester County Airport;
- Monitor the Bee-Line and Metro-North Commuter Railroad for any weather-related route changes or delays;
- Do not approach or drive over any downed wires – assume they are live;
- Ensure that you have flashlights, batteries and non-perishable foods on hand in the event of a power outage;
- Be a good neighbor and check on senior citizens who live near you or persons who live alone.

The Westchester County Police will have extra Patrol and Emergency Service Unit officers working to assist motorists and to close sections of parkways if conditions require it. Public Safety Commissioner Terrance Raynor also urged residents to avoid unnecessary travel to make it easier for officers to respond to accidents and emergencies and for snow plows to do their work.

The Department of Emergency Services will be monitoring the storm and will be prepared to assist municipalities as needed with emergency supplies and equipment. The Emergency Communications Center, also known as 60 Control, will have additional personnel assigned due to the potential for a high volume of calls for fire and EMS service. DES also reports that the Fire Training Center in Valhalla will be closed on Tuesday and all classes will be rescheduled.

The Health Department advised residents to be aware of a range of hazards that can occur during a storm both at home and when traveling.

Health Commissioner Sherlita Amler, MD, said: “Dress warmly in several layers of loose-fitting clothing to trap body heat when you go out to shovel and keep a spare blanket in your car in case of breakdowns. Wear a hat, gloves and a scarf. Instead of waiting until the snow stops, shovel a few times to avoid straining yourself. Clear the snow off the roof of your car to avoid creating a hazard for others and don’t shovel snow into the street. If you are able to, clear a path for your elderly neighbors and check on them. Low temperatures can be life-threatening, especially for seniors, infants and people who are at increased risk for hypothermia.”

Warning signs of hypothermia in adults include stumbling, mumbling, fumbling and grumbling, shivering, slurred speech and confusion. Infants with hypothermia may appear sluggish, with very low energy and bright red, cold skin.

Frostbite can happen with little warning. Numbness can occur so quickly that the individual, unaware of being frostbitten, may remain outside, increasing the chance of permanent damage. Older people, and those with diabetes, are especially vulnerable to frostbite because of impaired circulation.

When working, exercising or playing outdoors in cold weather, follow these tips to prevent frostbite and hypothermia:

- Start with synthetic or silk thermal underwear to wick moisture away.
- Add fleece or wool sweaters or sweatshirts to trap heat and keep cold out.
- Top it off with a waterproof or water-repellent jacket and pants.
- Add gloves, a hat and sturdy shoes or boots with good traction.
- Go indoors when you begin to feel cold.

If you think that someone is suffering from hypothermia or frostbite, call a medical provider immediately.

Residents who lose power and use a portable generator to fuel their homes should be aware that using a generator indoors can be deadly within minutes. Never use a generator inside your house or in partly enclosed areas such as garages, basements, porches, crawlspaces, sheds, carports or breezeways, even if your windows are open. Generators should only be operated outside, away from open windows.

Latimer said the County has been in touch with Con Edison and NYSEG and both utilities will have extra crews on hand to respond to power outages.

If you lose power, call your utility company. Con Edison can be reached at 1-800-75-CONED; NYS Electric and Gas can be reached at 1-800-572-1131 for electrical outages and 1-800- 572-1121 for gas.

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