News Release

Santa Rosa County
Board of County Commissioners
Pubic Information Office
www.santarosa.fl.gov
@SRCBOCC

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#140128-COLDWTR4

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Winter Storm Update #4

New Information Highlighted

This will be the last full update for the evening of Jan. 28. Road closures will be announced as they occur.

The Citizens Information Line is open. Citizens may call (850) 983-INFO (4636) with questions.

National Weather Service Forecast

- The National Weather Service Winter Storm Warning remains in effect until 6 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 29.
- Hard freeze warning from 10 p.m. Jan. 29 until 9 a.m. Jan. 30.
- A wind chill advisory is in effect from 2 a.m. to 9 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 29. Prevent frostbite by wearing multiple layers, loose fitting clothing, mittens and face protection if exposed to the cold weather.
- Isolated slick spots are possible with freezing rain and sleet falling intermittently Ice accumulations of .1 to .6 inch and a total of 1 to **2.2** inches of snow fall is possible.
- Temperatures are not forecasted to rise above the mid 30's through Wednesday, Jan. 29.
- Impacts include dangerous travel conditions, broken tree limbs and power outages.
- ***Citizens are asked to avoid driving if possible Tuesday, Jan. 28 and Wednesday, Jan. 29.***

County Roads & Bridges

- Chumuckla Highway (C.R. 197) is beginning to ice over north of Willard Norris Road. Extreme caution should be used on all roadways, and drivers should be alert for further deterioration of roadway conditions.
- **There are no road or bridge closures at this time.** Please be aware that there are numerous rumors spreading regarding road and bridge closures. Any road or bridge closures will be announced as they occur.
    - Glover Lane in Milton was closed temporarily due to a downed power line but is now open.
- Public works has sand on standby to place on roadways. Staff will monitor our bridges during the freezing rain, sleet, and snow periods to determine when or if it is appropriate to apply sand. If a bridge is deemed by staff or law enforcement to be unsafe to cross because of the layer of ice, barricades will be placed until sand and/or scraping takes place and the bridge is passable again.
- Sand cannot be used until the rain and sleet have stopped. Public works crews will evaluate any closed areas late Tuesday evening and early Wednesday morning and mobilize the equipment, with the hopes of having roadways open as soon as possible Wednesday morning.

State Roads & Bridges

- All roads and bridges on the state highway system are open.
- The Florida Department of Transportation District Three continues to monitor weather forecasts for Northwest Florida and take necessary precautions as rain and icy weather moves through the Panhandle.
- Equipment is loaded with dry sand and is ready for deployment as needed. Regional road advisories will be posted on Dynamic Message.
- Drivers may call Florida 511 from their mobile phones. Additionally, updates will be provided as conditions develop at the following: www.FL511.com; @myfdot_nwfl; d3sunguide.com.

Power Outages

- Power outages are sporadic and crews are responding to reported outages. Outage numbers as of 5 p.m. are:

    - Gulf Power – 758, an outage map is available at MyGulfPower.com.
    - Escambia River Electric Cooperative – 0
- Please do not call 9-1-1 to report power outages. Power outages should be reported to Gulf Power at 1-800-GU-Power (1-800-487-6937) or Escambia River Cooperative, Inc. at 1-877-OUT-EREC (1-877-688-3732).
- Never touch a fallen power line, and assume all wires on the ground are electrically charged.

Closures/Cancellations

- Santa Rosa County Schools are closed Wednesday, Jan. 29, including before and after school activities.
- Santa Rosa County offices, the library system, the Jay Transfer Facility and the Central Landfill are closed Wednesday, Jan. 29.
- Courts in Santa Rosa County are closed Wednesday, Jan. 29.
- Santa Rosa Circuit Court:
    - Wednesday – Detention and shelter hearings will be conducted in Escambia County by the Escambia County duty judge.
    - Tuesday – Delinquency trials have been rescheduled to Friday
    - Wednesday – Domestic Violence Injunctions – rescheduled to Thursday, Jan. 30.
    - Judge Hilliard will be conducting 1st appearances at the jail the next day at 9 a.m.
    - Individuals that may have hearings not included in the rescheduled listings above should call their attorney or their respective Clerk of Court for further information.
- Santa Rosa County Health Department is closed Wednesday, Jan. 29.
- The University of West Florida will close all campuses Wednesday, Jan. 29. Normal University operations, classes, events, campus activities and online courses will resume Thursday, Jan. 30, unless conditions change, in which case, University officials will notify all students, faculty and staff.
  Residential students should remain within residence halls and limit outside trips to necessary activities. Please contact on-call duty residential staff if you have any questions. All essential personnel are asked to report to work.
- All Pensacola State College campuses and centers will remain closed on Wednesday, Jan. 29. The College will resume normal operations at 10 a.m. on Thursday, Jan. 30. All classes that begin prior to 10 a.m. on Thursday are cancelled.
- The Natural Resources Damage Assessment meeting scheduled for 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 28 at the Bay Center was rescheduled for Monday, Feb. 3.
- The Friends of the Navarre Library book sale scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 30 and Friday, Jan. 31 is canceled.
- The Navarre Pier will be closed Wednesday, Jan. 29.
- Gulf Islands National Seashore visitor centers in Florida and Mississippi are closed Wednesday, Jan. 29. The park and campgrounds remain open for public use.
- Allied Waste/ Republic Services will be picking up yard waste in Gulf Breeze on Saturday and running the regular schedule on Thursday and Friday in the City of Gulf Breeze. Customers in central and North Santa Rosa County will be serviced one day later than scheduled and the customers that we were not able to service today will be picked up early on Thursday.
- The Northwest Florida Water Management is closed Wednesday, Jan. 29 and is currently scheduled to re-open Thursday morning.
- The City of Milton is closed Wednesday, Jan. 29.
- Staffing at Gulf Breeze City Hall will be dependent on road conditions so normal services may not be available Wednesday, Jan. 29. Critical information will be posted to the City website if possible. Please use online payment or toll free 24 hour automated payment (855-246-7331) system for utility bills. No garbage collection on Wednesday, Jan. 29. Any missed residences will be collected and normal Thursday routes will be serviced. YARD WASTE COLLECTION IS RESCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY
- Naval Air Station Whiting ceased air operations on the base until noon Jan. 29.
    - NAS Whiting Field personnel designated as non-essential are advised to depart at noon today and return to work at noon Wednesday.
    - Training Air Wing FIVE non-essential personnel are advised to depart at noon and return to work at their normal time tomorrow unless otherwise notified.
    - All base Morale Welfare and Recreation facilities will at noon Jan. 29 with the exception of the golf course, pro shop, and golf course snack bar which will reopen Jan. 30 at its normal time. This will include the Child Development Center; Fitness Center, Bowling Center, Liberty Center and other snack bars.

- The Navy Exchange Main Store, Bachelor's Quarters Mini-Mart, and gas station will reopen Wednesday, Jan. 29, time to be announced, subject to weather conditions. The Whiting Pines Mini-Mart will close Jan 28 at 4:30 pm, and will reopen tomorrow, time to be announced, subject to weather conditions.
- The Branch Health Clinic will reopen at noon, Jan. 29. The clinic is processing all patient appointments currently booked within that period for rescheduling. Patients may call the Family Medicine Clinic at (850)-623-7551 or Military/Aviation Medicine at (850)-623-7152 to schedule appointments. Any patient requiring immediate assistance should call 911.
- The NAS Whiting Field Commissary will reopen at 12:30 p.m. Jan. 29.

Cold Weather Shelters

- If the temperature cannot be maintained at your home, make temporary arrangements to stay elsewhere, including with friends and family. Two cold weather shelters for the homeless and those who are not able to maintain heat in their homes are available Monday- Wednesday:
  - Ferris Hill Baptist Church located at 6848 Chaffin Street in Milton and
  - Community of Christ Church located at 2111 Presidio Street in Navarre
- The shelters will open on the following dates and times:
  - Tuesday night – shelter opens at 5 p.m. and closes at 9 a.m. Wednesday.
  - Wednesday night - those who would like to stay at the shelter must arrive between 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
- Shelters are for people who are homeless or heatless, can care for themselves, and are not at risk to themselves or others. No one will be admitted to the shelter that is under the influence of drugs or alcohol and are unable to walk unaided or are disoriented.

Cold Weather Safety

- Citizens are urged to remember the five P's of cold weather:
  - ***Protect People:*** Remember to dress in layers and wear a hat and gloves. It is important to try to stay out of the wind and to stay dry. Also, remember to check on young children and the elderly family and neighbors who are the most sensitive to cold weather. If the temperature cannot be maintained at a home, make temporary arrangements to stay elsewhere, including with friends and family or at one of the cold weather shelters.
  - ***Protect Pets:*** If cold weather is in the forecast, be sure to bring outdoor pets inside or give them a warm shelter to stay in.
  - ***Protect Plants:*** Cover cold sensitive plants to protect them from the dangerous temperatures.
  - ***Protect Pipes:*** Cover pipes and allow outdoor faucets to slowly drip to prevent from freezing and breaking.
  - ***Practice Fire Safety:*** Use safe heating sources indoors. Do not use fuel-burning devices such as grills; they release carbon monoxide, which is a deadly gas. Also, make sure to use space heaters according to their instructions and be attentive to open flames. In the event of long-term power outages, be extremely careful when using generators, lanterns, gas powered appliances or when cooking on charcoal grills or gas grills. These appliances produce dangerous levels of carbon monoxide which is a deadly, invisible and odorless gas that can cause poisoning in only a matter of minutes. Equipment or appliances that produce carbon monoxide should never be used indoors. Opening doors and windows or using fans will not stop carbon monoxide build-up.

Driving Safety

Ice and possible snow on most roadways is expected. Santa Rosa County Emergency Management asks residents to take special precautions when driving:

- Drive according to the conditions on the road. Remember bridges, overpasses and infrequently traveled roads will freeze first.
- Allow extra time to get to your destination.
- Keep your distance. The distance needed to stop on ice is twice as long as under normal driving circumstances. Keep at least a three-car distance from the vehicle directly in front of you.
- Don't use cruise control on icy roads.
- To avoid skidding break gently and if your wheels start to lock up, ease off the brake. Applying pressure to your brakes while on ice will cause a vehicle to skid. Brake only during your approach.

Actions Taken by the County

In preparation for the low temperatures, Santa Rosa County has taken the following steps:

- A local state of emergency was enacted at noon Jan. 27. Declaring a local state of emergency allows the county to make formal requests to the state and FEMA for assistance if needed.
- The emergency operations center is at a level two, or partial activation with essential staff, until further notice.
- The Citizens Information Line is open. Citizens may call (850) 983-INFO (4636) with questions.
- The American Red Cross is on standby to open a public warming shelter if needed for any long-term power outages.

General Safety Information

- Visit www.santarosa.fl.gov or follow us on Twitter at @SRCBOCC
- Please monitor your home weather radio and local media outlets for the most up-to-date information.
- Your best defense in any disaster is a NOAA Weather radio.
- Citizens can signup to automatically receive breaking news alerts from Santa Rosa County Emergency Management via e-mail or as a text message on their cell phone at: www.santarosa.fl.gov/emergency/publicwarning.html.
- Santa Rosa County Division of Emergency Management's latest all-hazards disaster guide is now available online at www.santarosa.fl.gov/news/factsheet/2013%20Disaster%20Guide.pdf or at county offices and libraries, local chambers of commerce, and local retailers

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