

HAMPTON VA

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Hampton prepares for snow, arctic cold

Monday, Feb. 16, 2015 – Hampton Public Works employees, emergency workers and other city employees continue to prepare for the winter storm that's expected later today.

Working in 12-hour shifts, crews from Public Works began pretreating Hampton streets early Monday. Hampton police and firefighters, along with staff from the city's Parks and Recreation and Human Services departments, are also preparing for the storm.

Tyler Richardson, superintendent of bridges and streets, said Hampton has 3,000 tons of salt is available, 10,000 gallons of brine (with the ability to make 2,500 gallons per hour) and 5,000 gallons of calcium chloride. In addition, the city also has 35 snow trucks, three loaders, two backhoes, 80 operators and two dispatchers available.

A Nights Welcome, the program that provides overnight shelter for the homeless, is at First United Methodist Church this week. Arrangements have been made so that the church, located at 110 Queen St., can remain open Tuesday for those who stayed there Monday night. If the shelter remains open Tuesday, the day center for homeless run by H.E.L.P in Buckroe will be closed. In addition, city officials are prepared to open an additional shelter if it's needed.

During a conference call between state officials and local authorities Monday afternoon, the National Weather Service said the area should see 3-5 inches of snow starting about 7 p.m., with the possibility of sleet or freezing rain late in the evening. The precipitation should end about 9 a.m. Tuesday, but the arctic cold will be around until the end of the week.

City schools and offices were closed Monday because of Presidents Day. A decision on whether city offices are open Tuesday - or whether the opening is delayed - will be made later today. City schools are expected to make a decision later today on opening or closing Tuesday. And the governor's office is expected to decide later today on whether to declare a state of emergency in Virginia.

Residents concerned about trash collection are encouraged to place refuse and recycle containers curbside as normal and to leave them there until a collection is made this week.

Statewide, up to a foot of snow is expected in the western areas of Virginia. Gov. Terry McAuliffe said motorists "should monitor weather reports and road conditions and avoid or limit traveling when the storm occurs." He said state road crews are ready to treat and plow roads as needed.

Virginia Transportation Secretary Aubrey Layne warned state residents about dangerously cold wind chills and urged residents to “ensure you and your vehicle are prepared to travel and deal with any emergency.”

Hampton’s Office of Emergency Management will continue to monitor the weather and local conditions. Statewide, residents are encouraged to go to 511virginia.org for more information on road conditions.

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