

Storm Update



Dear Residents,

It has been quite a first week in office. They talk about trial by fire...this was trial by snow. This week put the signature theme of my inaugural speech, "working together" to the test, and I am so pleased that we delivered.

This storm challenged our city to work together—from city employees, to snow removal contractors, to residents—pitching in together in the City of Newton. I am so grateful for our teamwork..

As we head into the weekend, I'd like to share some updates:

- Every snow event results in a two-step plowing effort. **During** a storm, the city endeavors to keep the streets passable for emergency vehicles and limited travel. **After** a storm has passed, a second phase starts focusing on snow removal, and the city begins clearing roadways from 'curb to curb' to get the roads as wide as possible again.
- Storms of this magnitude can be a source of understandable frustration. Residents who spend hours clearing their driveways and sidewalks go into the house, get warm, and watch a plow push snow back over their work—it is annoying and we've all been there!
- However, there are legitimate reasons for the way the DPW does its plowing. First, the roads need to be cleared to allow space for additional snowfall and to maintain the full width of the road for safe travel. In addition, the storm drains along the edge of the curbs need to be cleared to prevent flooding when the snow starts melting.
- We appreciate everyone's patience as we clear out from the storm. Crews will be working all weekend on streets, curb cuts, corners, parking lots, sidewalks that we're responsible for, etc.
- Snow-related issues may be reported to the City by utilizing the online 311 reporting system at <http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/311.asp> or by using the 311 app. And as always, call 911 in case of emergency.
- Trash pickup will be on a delay next week (catching up from the storm this week) and the following week (due to the Monday Martin Luther King holiday). Check the home page of the Newton website for details at www.newtonma.gov

I am honored to serve with so many fine Newton employees and workers as your Mayor. (Did you know that more than 300 people worked 24 hours + straight to keep the city safe during the storm?) These first days in office have been challenging but so reassuring because of the great team here and I already love my new job!

Have a wonderful weekend even with the frigid cold.

Warmly,

Ruthanne

Storm Response Recap:

Our Department of Public Works had more than 180 pieces of equipment ready, with 170 city employees and another 112 contracted workers starting a shift that began at 6 a.m. and continued

over the next 30 hours.

At the city's Emergency Operations Center, which opened at 8 on Thursday morning and stayed open until Friday morning at 11, Director of Emergency Management Chief Bruce Proia had more than 20 people working, some on rotating shifts, and some staying through the night. Staffing at the EOC included personnel from the Fire and Police departments, and representatives from the Department of Public Works to handle calls from residents. In addition, shelter and medical personnel and search and rescue crews were activated or at the ready.

The Police Department also beefed up patrols by assigning detectives, safety officers, and traffic officers to the patrol bureau. Instead of the usual 9 cruisers on duty during a routine Thursday, there were 21 out while the snow was falling to ensure there were enough officers available in case of a weather-related emergency.

City snow removal crews are being dispatched on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights from 9 pm to 6 am. Different villages will be serviced each night. This heavy machinery work is done at night so it is safer for our crews and citizens and minimizes disruption to our daily routines in our villages.

Total snowfall, ambient temperature, and wind conditions make each snowstorm unique. The goal for this particular storm is to have our cleanup complete by the beginning of Monday morning.