



NEWS

MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

VALERIE A. ARKOOSH, MD, MPH, CHAIR
KENNETH E. LAWRENCE, JR., VICE CHAIR
JOSEPH C. GALE, COMMISSIONER

Contact:

Kaitlyn Foti, Public Information Officer

610-278-3062 kfoti@montcopa.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MARCH 6, 2018



Montgomery County Declares Emergency in Preparation of Storm

Norristown, PA (March 6, 2018) – Montgomery County is declaring a Disaster Emergency and asking residents to prepare for the possibility of significant snow and high winds beginning Tuesday night. All county offices and the Montgomery County Courthouse will be closed Wednesday, March 7.

The National Weather Service has issued a Winter Storm Warning for Montgomery County, effective at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 6, through 3 a.m. Thursday, March 8. A Code Blue cold weather declaration has also been declared from 9 p.m. Tuesday through 9 a.m. Thursday. Strong winds accompanied by forecasts for heavy, wet snow of more than six inches and up to 12 inches in western Montgomery County could create unsafe conditions and cause trees to come down.

“The Montgomery County Department of Public Safety stands ready to support and coordinate with first responders and assist residents of Montgomery County during the winter storm,” said Dr. Val Arkoosh, Chair, Montgomery County Commissioners. “The declaration of disaster emergency allows our staff to be equipped with all the resources needed before, during, and after the storm to protect residents and property.”

The declaration allows the county to enter into contracts to deal with the emergencies without the usual formal requirements of bidding and public notice, and allows the county to allocate funds without the need for a resolution. The declaration will also make the county eligible for state grants to cover the costs of dealing with and cleaning up from the storm, should the state declare a state of emergency.

The commissioners can formally adopt the emergency declaration at their next meeting, retroactive to the date that it was declared.

The Montgomery County Public Safety Department will increase staffing in its 9-1-1 emergency call center and open its Emergency Operations Center at midnight Wednesday and through the duration of the storm. Representatives from the National Guard, PECO, PEMA, and PennDOT will be present at the Emergency

Operations Center.

Residents are asked to only call 9-1-1 if they need a response by police, fire, or EMS. Power outages should be reported directly to your utility: for PECO, call 1-800-841-4141; for PPL, call 1-800-DIAL-PPL (1-800-342-5775); for First Energy, call 1-888-LIGHTSS (1-888-544-4877).

For other storm related issues, including downed trees or limbs, residents are urged to contact their township or borough.

The Department of Public Safety recommends that residents take the following steps to prepare for the storm:

- Sign up to receive emergency text and email alerts at readymontco.org
- Stay off the roads Wednesday
- If you must travel, be aware that there will be very low visibility; bring a flashlight, food, water, a blanket, and a shovel in your car; avoid any downed power lines, which could be live and extremely dangerous; and if you become stranded, stay inside your vehicle
- Plug in your phone and other essential devices so that they are fully charged
- If you have well water, fill your bathtub and containers with water
- Prepare a several day supply of essential medications
- Check on friends and neighbors who may need assistance
- If you see someone in need of shelter, call Your Way Home by dialing 2-1-1 or 1-866-964-7925
- Take caution when shoveling, especially those with chronic conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure.

For a more detailed list and other preparedness instructions, please go to: <http://www.readymontco.montcopa.org>.

To receive emergency text messages with real time public safety updates, follow the Department of Public Safety on Facebook at [MontgomeryCountyPAPublicSafety](https://www.facebook.com/MontgomeryCountyPAPublicSafety) and on Twitter @MCpublicsafety.