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Press Release

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[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

### Governor Cuomo Directs State Agencies to Prepare for Impending Nor'easter Winter Storm

#### *Governor Advises New Yorkers to Exercise Caution and Avoid Unnecessary Travel*

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today directed state agencies to prepare winter storm fighting assets and personnel for an impending Nor'easter winter storm that is expected to hit New York State from late Wednesday through Thursday. As the storm approaches the state, the Governor reminded citizens to prepare properly and avoid unnecessary travel.

"I have again directed state agencies to prepare and coordinate resources for the Nor'easter that is forecasted for late tonight and into Thursday," Governor Cuomo said. "As we have done in previous storms this season, the State is directing necessary resources to the areas in greatest need, and we will be flexible in our ability to redirect equipment and personnel as the storm reaches the state. I urge all New Yorkers to take appropriate steps to prepare for the storm, check on their families and friends, particularly the elderly and vulnerable, and to avoid any unnecessary travel. The best way to stay informed is to pay attention to local media outlets and heed any advice from local professional emergency management personnel."

Steps taken by the State at the direction of the Governor to ensure readiness include:

#### **Roads, Bridges and Public Transit**

The following actions will allow plow operations on critical roadways to be maintained overnight while ensuring driver safety:

The State has 1,789 plows, 359 loaders and 4,185 operators stationed and ready for the storm, along with 291,000 tons of salt on hand statewide.

All Thruway and New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) maintenance headquarters will be fully staffed around the clock for the duration of the storm.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) has activated all storm-fighting forces across New York City Transit subways and buses, Metro-North Railroad, Long Island Rail Road and MTA Bridges and Tunnels. For safety of customers and MTA personnel, all MTA services are subject to being delayed, curtailed or suspended during a storm as significant as the one currently forecast. MTA personnel are preparing for the possibility of snow and ice building up overnight and possible high winds, and customers are urged to monitor [www.mta.info](http://www.mta.info) for service status before leaving home Thursday.

The New York City Subway plans to operate on normal weekday schedule for the morning rush hour. The Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad are developing service plans for tomorrow and will announce schedule details later this afternoon.

New York City buses may reduce service by up to 20 percent if conditions warrant. If the storm worsens throughout the course of Thursday, the LIRR and Metro-North may offer extra afternoon service for those looking to depart work early.

Service changes will be announced in real time via web, apps, email and text messages to subscribers, and social media.

The MTA is mobilizing its workforce to clear snow and ice from platforms, stairways and walkways. The MTA will work to keep trains and buses providing as much service as can safely be run, while at the same time preventing trains or buses from becoming stuck.

New York City Transit subway trains will be stored on underground express tracks during mid-day hours Thursday to protect them from the elements, which will affect express service on portions of some subway lines. The 220 outdoor track miles of the subway system are more susceptible to weather-related conditions and will be monitored closely. The Rockaway [A](#) [S](#), Sea Beach [N](#), Flushing [7](#), Brighton [B](#) [Q](#) and the Dyre Av [5](#) Lines are particularly vulnerable to accumulating snow and ice and service may need to be temporarily suspended while snow blowers are dispatched to clear snow from the tracks. In addition, some overnight track work has been canceled overnight and FASTRACK on the [A](#) [C](#) in Brooklyn has been canceled for the remainder of the week.

The Department of Buses began to install tire chains on buses last night and all buses operating in the storm will be equipped with tire chains to enhance their traction on snow and ice. However, even with tire chains, buses will be susceptible to delays based on road conditions and topography. Articulated buses will be removed from service overnight, and supervisors and tow trucks will be posted throughout the city to respond quickly to any buses which are unable to move because of road conditions.

More than 1,000 subway workers will be on duty when the storm hits to clear snow and ice from subway stations, starting first with those stations located outdoors. Depending on the pace and timing of the storm, not all 468 subway stations may be cleared of ice and snow by the beginning of rush hour, so customers are urged to use extreme caution on all staircases and platforms.

Paratransit customers may also experience additional travel and wait times. Customers may want to reconsider travel, unless medically necessary.

All customers on MTA services should be prepared to use extreme caution on subway and railroad staircases and platforms, in bus stops, and on bridge and tunnel roadways during the storm. Crews will spread salt and de-icer to prepare for the expected ice buildup, but if it occurs during the morning rush, it may present hazardous conditions anywhere within the MTA network. Use handrails on staircases, do not run on platforms, stay clear of the platform edge and drive with extra caution to remain safe.

The Long Island and Metro-North railroads have called in hundreds of extra personnel who will keep platforms at their nearly 250 stations clear of snow and ice. The railroads will activate switch heaters to ensure switches continue to function despite cold temperatures and icing and will run trains throughout the night to patrol for weather-related problems.

The Long Island Rail Road run special train cars modified to put antifreeze on third rails to keep them clear of ice, and Metro-North trains use special third-rail shoes to keep them clear of snow and ice buildup. Railroad crews are armed with chainsaws to clear fallen trees that could block trains, and Metro-North will pay special attention to overhead catenary wires on the New Haven Line, which are susceptible to ice and snow.

The railroads have treated door panels with anti-freeze agents and pre-positioned rail-mounted snow fighting equipment to combat snow accumulation along the tracks. That includes 17 snow blowers that blast cold air, or hot air from rail-mounted jet engines, plow trains, double-ended snow broom/thrower machines, front-end loaders and backhoes.

MTA Bridges and Tunnels has 98 pieces of snow-fighting equipment on hand. All roadways and ramps leading to its seven bridges and two tunnels will be de-iced regularly throughout the storm. In addition, MTA bridges have embedded roadway sensors that deliver real-time information on wind velocity, wind direction, humidity and precipitation via wireless communication. These sensors help determine which roadways need more de-icing and whether speed restrictions are necessary.

### **Power**

The New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) is prepared to extend its call center helpline hours beginning Thursday, February 13, from 7:30 AM to 7:30PM, and continuing Friday, February 14 from 7:30AM to 7:30PM, if needed, to assist consumers in storm preparation and response efforts. The helpline number is 1-800-342-3377.

PSC staff will continue to monitor the utilities' efforts throughout the storm and during the restoration period.

The electric utilities are prepared to respond to power disruptions throughout the event. In total, approximately 3,800 field workers are available to respond statewide. Additional crews are also available through mutual assistance, if needed.

The New York Power Authority (NYPA) has undertaken storm preparations at its statewide power plants and transmission facilities and is receiving regular updates from the National Weather Service. The preparatory measures include having the necessary snow removal equipment in place, backup emergency generators pre-staged, fully tested and available if needed, and work vehicles fueled and ready for use.

### **Public Safety**

The Governor has ordered activation of the State Emergency Operation Center to monitor the storm.

All specialty vehicles in the State Police's fleet, including four wheel drive vehicles, have been prepared for emergency response use. All emergency power and communications equipment has been tested.

State Police troopers normally assigned to Traffic Incident Management and Commercial Vehicle Enforcement troopers have been re-assigned to patrol duties for this storm.

State Police, DHSES and NYSDOT will provide staff to any county emergency operations centers that may be activated to help coordinate responses with local agencies.