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Press Release

February 4, 2014

[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

Governor Cuomo Announces Storm Preparation Measures

MTA Customers Can Anticipate System-Wide Delays and Possible Service Suspensions if Conditions Worsen

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo tonight announced that the State will close Interstate 84 to tandem trailer trucks beginning at midnight tonight in advance of a major winter storm expected to hit New York on Wednesday.

"In anticipation of heavy snow, ice and freezing conditions, the State is closing I-84 to tandem trailer trucks, directing state agencies to take preventive measures and continuing to mobilize necessary resources for local communities," Governor Cuomo said. "We are taking every precaution needed to keep New Yorkers safe and ensure the State is in a position to respond as quickly and effectively to the snow and any emergency situations. I urge New Yorkers to put safety as their first priority, only travel when absolutely necessary, and keep an eye out for their neighbors."

I-84 to Close to Tandem Trailer Trucks at Midnight:

Effective at midnight tonight, tandem trailer trucks will be banned from traveling on Interstate 84 in New York State from the Pennsylvania state line to the Connecticut state line, due to the expected weather conditions.

The travel ban will remain in effect until further notice.

New York State provides a travel advisory system that features real-time travel reports and can be accessed by phone at 511 or online at www.511ny.org. The Web site features a color-coded map indicating which state roads are snow covered, ice covered, wet, dry, or closed to help travelers determine if travel is advisable. The system provides real-time snow and ice conditions for interstates and other heavily traveled roads, as reported by snowplow operators.

Travelers on the New York State Thruway can find real-time traffic and road condition updates at www.Thruway.ny.gov, can sign up for TRANSAlert emails at <http://www.thruway.ny.gov/tas/index.shtml>, or follow @ThruwayTraffic on Twitter. Also for more information and to sign up for free alerts about hazardous travel conditions in your area, go to www.nyalert.gov.

Thruway travelers can also find useful information on the Highway Advisory Radio (HAR) stations which broadcast traffic advisories, road conditions, and safety tips 24-hours-a-day. HAR frequencies can be found at <http://www.thruway.ny.gov/travelers/har/index.html>.

MTA Braces for Overnight Winter Snow and Ice Storm

Confronted by the likelihood of snow, cold temperatures and ice, Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) personnel are busy working to keep ahead of tonight's winter storm. Customers are reminded that as conditions worsen, some services will be delayed and may even be curtailed or suspended. Prior to their morning commutes, customers are urged to monitor the www.mta.info website regularly as well as television and radio reports for service updates.

Customers should monitor www.mta.info Service Status for the most up-to-date information on service, and sign up for real-time service updates via email and text message, at www.mymtaalerts.com. Customers should be aware that icing conditions are possible in the morning and they should use extra caution on platforms and stairs and plan for extra time to get to their station.

NYC Transit Subway and Buses

In order to prevent subway trains from being blocked in yards, they will be moved and stored underground on express tracks during the overnight hours, affecting express service on portions of certain lines into Wednesday morning. Bus service will run at 85-90 percent capacity and some suspensions are possible on a route-by-route basis.

Throughout the evening, more than 1,000 workers will be assigned to shoveling and salting subway station platforms and stairways. To ensure safety in the system's 468 stations, clearing snow and ice from stations is a top priority but customers are reminded to be cautious, walk carefully and use handrails when climbing or descending stairs.

Track and signal personnel will also be on duty at strategic locations, available to address any problems that may arise and to keep track switches clear of ice and snow build-up. Snow-fighting equipment is prepped, fueled and ready to go including five de-icers – retired subway cars modified with tanks and other specialized equipment to spray de-icing fluid on the third rail - which are already in operation. Additionally during the overnight hours, 80 subways trains will be equipped with scraper shoes to keep ice off the third rail.

Despite all of the work that is being performed, the possibility exists that service on some outdoor lines may be suspended if it is determined that deteriorating weather conditions could allow a build-up of ice and snow significant enough to stall trains. While the underground portions of the system remain unaffected during snowstorms, there are nearly 220 miles of outdoor track throughout the boroughs.

The Department of Buses is also keeping a close watch on weather conditions and local buses are being equipped with chains for increased traction. Articulated buses will be removed from service after tonight's p.m. peak. Only standard buses with tire chains will operate during the overnight and all buses for tomorrow's a.m. peak will have tire chains. More than 50 pieces of snow-fighting equipment will be deployed along bus routes and maintenance personnel will be ready if needed. Depending on observed ridership and road conditions reported by bus operators and supervision, service may be cut back as much as 15 percent.

Due to conditions, Paratransit customers may also experience additional travel and wait times. Customers may want to reconsider travel, unless medically necessary. For our Access-A-Ride paratransit service, a dashboard storm monitoring system is in place to track immobilized vehicles and customers. NYC Transit has also coordinated a procedure with New York City first responders and the Office of Emergency Management for rescuing customers on immobilized vehicles or those who develop medical needs during storms. Also in place is a new paratransit-specific Storm Action Plan that includes processes for curtailing all non-medically essential service.

Metro-North Railroad

Metro-North serves a territory that is forecast to experience heavier snowfall and potential icing conditions than elsewhere in the region. In anticipation of reduced ridership seen in past storms, Metro-North will operate on a special schedule that calls for an 18 percent reduction in the number of morning rush hour trains being operated. Twenty-seven of the usual 154 morning rush hour trains will be combined. The schedule is available at this link http://mta.info/supplemental/mnr/mnr_weather_info.html, through the real-time Metro-North Train Time app for iPhone and Android, and via text message through CooCoo.

The reduced schedule allows Metro-North to have extra trains available to be deployed to pick up passengers if the need arises.

Heavy wet snow and freezing rain poses particular threats to overhead catenary wires on the New Haven Line and to all lines from fallen trees. Accordingly, patrol trains will operate throughout the night to keep wires clear. Track maintenance personnel will have chain saws, sharpened, oiled and gassed up.

Metro-North will position diesel locomotives at major junctions so they can be ready to assist any trains that experience weather-related difficulties. A team of mechanics will be at Pelham, where New Haven Line trains change from third rail to overhead power, in case any trains have trouble either extending or retracting their pantographs.

Metro-North is activating rail heaters to keep all switches clear of snow and ice and fully operable. Hundreds of extra employees have been called in to pre-salt and clear platforms. All electric trains are equipped with special third rail shoes that prevent buildup of snow and ice.

Long Island Rail Road

The Long Island Rail Road anticipates operating on a regular weekday schedule throughout Wednesday. Throughout the night, railroad personnel will be mobilized to prepare for the storm. The railroad is paying special attention to the possibility that accumulation of ice on trees and power lines could cause them to fall and obstruct tracks. Extra personnel will be in position to clear tracks as needed.

Beginning after the conclusion of the evening rush hour on Tuesday, the LIRR will run special work trains that will apply antifreeze to the third rail, to help keep it free of ice buildup and ensure electric trains can draw sufficient power to operate.

The railroad has called up hundreds of extra personnel, who will pre-salt and clear platforms and continue to do so throughout the storm. The LIRR will position diesel locomotives at major junctions to assist any trains that become disabled, and is activating rail heaters to ensure that switches remain free of ice and snow and remain operable.

Customers are advised to use extra caution on platforms and stairs and give themselves extra time to get to their stations. Also, while the LIRR plans a normal schedule tomorrow, temporary service suspensions are a possibility due to icing conditions, including the possibility of downed power lines and/or trees. As always, signing up for LIRR email alerts at mta.info and downloading the LIRR Train Time app for smartphones is the best way to stay informed.

MTA Bridges and Tunnels

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 if speed restrictions are necessary.

If you must drive, motorists are asked to drive at reduced speeds and allow enough room between cars to accommodate sudden stops.

In order to enhance our communications with customers, the MTA has taken steps to ensure its communication systems function well during any type of emergency. The current website design allows for the quick posting of service information and includes a special weather page that becomes the www.mta.info homepage during weather-related events affecting operations.