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Press Release

March 13, 2017

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IMMEDIATE

Governor Cuomo Declares State of Emergency Beginning at Midnight Across New York

Underground Only MTA Subway Service in New York City on Tuesday Beginning at 4 a.m.; New York City Bus, LIRR and Metro North Service May be Suspended – Commuters Encouraged to Stay Home

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today declared a state of emergency across all 62 counties in New York ahead of the extreme winter storm expected to bring heavy snowfall and high winds. The Governor also directed non-essential state employees impacted by the winter storm to stay home from work on Tuesday without having to charge accruals.

At the Governor's direction, MTA express subway service will be suspended after the rush hour Monday night in order to store trains underground on those tracks. Beginning at 4 a.m. Tuesday, above-ground service on the subway will also be suspended. Commuters traveling on New York City Transit, Long Island Rail Road and Metro North are encouraged to stay home tomorrow, if possible, as additional service changes are expected. As the state continues to prepare for the storm, New Yorkers should exercise caution, avoid unnecessary travel and pay close attention to winter storm advisories as the day progresses.

"To ensure our local governments have the resources and support they need to prepare and respond quickly to the impending winter storm, I am declaring a statewide state of emergency," Governor Cuomo said. "With heavy snow and blizzard-like conditions expected from upstate to downstate, we are taking every precaution to keep New Yorkers safe. I urge residents to stay informed, avoid unnecessary travel, and where possible, leave work early as heavy snowfall is expected to begin tonight."

Snow is expected to cover Upstate New York, where 12 to 24 inches of snow is anticipated in the Western New York, Finger Lakes, and Central New York regions over a 48 hour period beginning Monday night. Areas south of Lake Ontario from Buffalo to Rochester will see periods of snowfall of 2 to 3 inches per hour during parts of the day Tuesday.

The heaviest snow accumulations are expected in the south and east of the Capital Region, the Mohawk Valley, and the Mid-Hudson Valley region where 20 to 24 inches of snow is expected from late Monday night through late Tuesday night and will taper off on Wednesday. Peak snowfall will fall on Tuesday during the daylight hours and in these areas, the bulk of the snowfall will from between 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday. Travel will be extremely dangerous from high rates of blowing and drifting snow.

The storm has shifted to the west and will have substantial impacts on the New York City areas. Snow will move into the lower Mid-Hudson Valley, New York City and Long Island regions after midnight on Monday. Heavy snow will be begin early Monday evening and will fall at a rate of 2 to 3 inches per hour for the Tuesday morning rush hour. By the evening commute, there is strong potential for 16 to 20 inches of snow with whiteout conditions throughout the day. Snowfall rates may reach 2 to 4 inches per hour at intermittent periods throughout the day, which will be exacerbated by gusty winds of 40-50 miles per hour in New York City and Long Island. Highest snow totals will be in the northern parts of New York City, Orange and Putnam counties which will see 20 to 24 inches of snow during the duration of the storm. Long Island especially areas near Montauk, will see wind gusts up to 60 mph which could take down tree limbs and power lines. Driving will be especially hazardous on Tuesday for both the morning and evening commutes. Minor coastal flooding is also expected during high tide.

Weather Warnings

- Winter Storm Warnings will go in effect for the Western New York region, Finger Lakes region, Central New York region, Mohawk Valley region, Southern Tier, and northern Capital Region from Monday night through Wednesday night.
- Winter Storm Warnings will go into effect for the upper Mid-Hudson Valley region and the Eastern Long Island region from late Monday night through Tuesday night.
- Winter Storm Warnings will go into effect for the North Country region from Tuesday morning through Wednesday morning.
- Blizzard Warning will go into effect for the lower Capital District region, Mid-Hudson Valley, New York City, and Western Long Island regions from late Monday night through Tuesday night.
- A Coastal Flood Warning will go into effect from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. on Tuesday along the South Bays of western Long Island and the Atlantic Ocean beachfront.

Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Check out www.mta.info and <https://twitter.com/MTA> for updates, including modified emergency schedules. Customers are also strongly encouraged to sign up for the MTA's various electronic notification systems – including direct email and text message alerts that can be customized for a customer's specific travel – via www.mymtaalerts.com and through the MTA's social media accounts.

SUBWAYS

Express service will stop running after rush hour on Monday night. Starting at 4 a.m. on Tuesday, above-ground subway service will be suspended. Please check the Underground Service Map for more details.

Snow-fighting equipment for subways will include more than 2,000 snow melting devices staged along the tracks at crucial track switches and along other infrastructure, including: 1,500 third rail heaters; 80 trains with scraper shoes, which are used on in-service trains to scrape ice off the third rail as a train moves along the tracks; 10 snow throwers, which have precise directional snow throwing equipment with rotating brushes that throw snow up to 300 feet from the track and can remove up to 3,000 tons of snow an hour; 7 de-icer train cars, which are trains equipped with ice scraping shoes that scrape off ice that has accumulated on the third rail. They also use pumping equipment to dispense a stream of nontoxic, biodegradable de-icing fluid to prevent ice buildup on the third rail. If ice is permitted to build up, subway car power pickup equipment will not be able to draw electric current from the third rail and the train will stop; 4 track jet blowers, which use a jet engine to remove accumulated snow from the roadbed. This piece of equipment is used primarily to keep the yards clear.

All previously planned subway maintenance, rehabilitation and construction projects have been cancelled through Tuesday afternoon.

BUSES

Normal bus service will run on Monday. Bus service is likely to be suspended on Tuesday morning based on local road and blizzard conditions. Until service suspension, all articulated buses are being replaced by standard 40-foot buses.

Bus operations has more than 90 pieces of snow-fighting equipment to supplement the work of municipal agencies. All local buses in service will have tires chained.

RAILROADS

LIRR and Metro-North railroads anticipate a normal evening rush hour on Monday night. Both railroads anticipate the likelihood of suspended service on Tuesday as conditions worsen and deep and blowing snow interfere with operations of third rail power, creating the potential to strand trains and customers. Service announcements on Tuesday service will be made before 4:30 a.m.

Metro-North Railroad: <https://twitter.com/MetroNorth>

Long Island Railroad: <https://twitter.com/LIRR>

Anti-freeze trains have been deployed throughout the systems to spray de-icer on the third rail along LIRR, where the rail is exposed, in an effort to prevent ice-build-up; non-passenger patrol trains will operate along the right-of-way to prevent snowdrifts from forming on the tracks. At stations, extra personnel have salted and cleared platforms of snow. Waiting rooms are being kept open around the clock on Long Island to provide shelter for customers and selected rooms are kept open at Metro-North stations. Scheduled maintenance work has been canceled during the storm.

Metro-North has approximately 1,500 personnel working specifically on storm preparation and response. Metro-North has more than 270 pieces of storm-fighting equipment on hand, including: 212 snowblowers, 35 pickup truck plows, 3 rail-bound jets, 767,000 pounds of salt.

LIRR has approximately 1,500 personnel working specifically on storm preparation and response and more than 400 pieces of equipment on hand, including: 362 snowblowers, 18 pickup truck plows, 22 front end loaders, 7 rail-bound jets, 800,000 pounds of salt.

BRIDGES AND TUNNELS

Bridges and Tunnels will remain open Monday night. Pedestrian walkways will close once sustained winds reach 40mph; All bridges will close to trucks when sustained winds reach 50mph and all traffic will be barred at 60mph.

Approximately 350 maintenance and operations personnel will be deployed during the storm, including about 270 specifically for snow-fighting. Electronic weather sensors are functional at all facilities to monitor weather and roadway conditions in real time. There are more than 9,000 tons of roadway de-icer on hand and more than 100 pieces of storm fighting equipment including trucks and plows are ready.

PARATRANSIT

Paratransit service will be suspended – other than extreme emergencies – starting Tuesday morning at 5 a.m.

New York City 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.