



MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning, Public Works & Transportation Committee

FROM: Chris Mills, Commissioner Public Works & Transportation & Harry Olivieri, Commissioner & Chief of Fires Service

DATE: February 7, 2020

MEMORANDUM NO.: TPW-2020-0002

RE: Winter Storm Preparedness – January 2020

PURPOSE OF THE MEMORANDUM:

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update summary of activities required for the January, 2020 Winter Storm events as it relates to Public Works Maintenance and the Fire Department Emergency Preparedness.

COMMENTS:

Although winter weather is often challenging and unpredictable, the Town of Halton Hills Public Works and Fire Service staff continued to provide a high level of winter maintenance and emergency preparedness services. This memo provides a summary of the work required to manage the winter storm events.

In anticipation of the heavy rainfalls, high winds, possible freezing rain and/or snow forecasted, Public Works and Fire Services staff prepared equipment and activities to address the inclement weather conditions forecasted for the community.

Below lists the various preventative measures performed, including post event activity information for both the Public Works and Fire Service departments:

Public Works Pre-Event Preparedness:

- Chainsaws were sharpened and fueled up.
- Four (4) portable generators were prepared.
- The Cube van was loaded with Water over road signs, and sandbags.
- Two (2) steam generators, for thawing of culverts were prepared.

- Six (6) Tandems trucks were equipped with chains on the tires for extra traction during a freezing rain event.
- Salt dome was completely loaded.
- Storm water runoff including, catchbasins, ditch inlets, ditches, and tributaries leading to the rivers were cleared of any and all debris, including snow and or ice.
- Continuous monitoring of the Credit river to ensure no substantial build up ice on the river itself and levels are low currently.
 - Three (3) large pumps were prepared.
 - Substantial supply of ¾ “ crusher run stored at PW for any erosion concerns.
 - Gas cans and diesel tanks fully supplied (2 with a capacity of 4,500 litres each).

Public Works Post Event Report:

- Total of 185.5 hrs worked (straight time).
 - Seven (7) staff on Saturday: during the torrential downpours clearing catch basins, ditch inlets
 - Fifteen (15) staff on Sunday: to salt the main arterial and collector routes, before sanding all urban and rural secondary roads.
- Responding to just over 50 phone calls from residents.
- Continuously monitored the Credit River, Silvercreek and many kilometers of ditches.
- Note: Because the weather was mild enough leading into the event, staff had zero frozen culverts and also no extra water due to melting snow.
- Two Road Closures due to the volume of water flowing over the roadway:
 - 10th Line south of 10 Side Rd.
 - 5 Side Rd between the 8th and 9th Line.
- FallBrook Trail was closed and subsequently grade due to erosion concerns.
- Fairy Lake breached its banks on Mill St. just east of Victoria Ave.
 - Fortunately it just ran down onto the roadway and got away through the catch basins.
 - No damage to any infrastructure on this occasion.
 - Staff monitored the pumps and added an additional gas pump at a storm pond on the 8th Line south of 32 Side Rd.

Fire Department Emergency Planning Preparedness and Activities Pre-Event:

- Monitoring Environment Canada & Ontario Emergency Management messaging.
- Monitoring other agency messaging such as Credit Valley Conservation Authority, Halton Conservation Authority, Halton Hills Hydro, Halton Region.
- Use of social media and e-mail to advise Senior Management Team, Council and Public of Environment Canada issuance of winter storm warning.
- All full-time and part-time given updates and weather status
- Staff assigned to:
 - Checking and testing fire department building emergency generators.

- All emergency vehicles and gas powered equipment topped up and tested where necessary.
- Small equipment and supplies checked.
- Weekend staffing levels confirmed.
- Senior Administrative staff (3) put on-call for the weekend.

Fire Service Post-Event Report:

- Continued monitoring of EnvCan, Weather Network, and above mentioned agency messaging throughout event.
- Liaising with Superintendent of Public Works staff & sharing information on Town status throughout storm (road closures, flooding etc.).
- Sharing info with Town Communications staff to post as necessary on social media.
- Updating the public on fire department social media.
- Continued monitoring of Credit River, Silver Creek & Fairy Lake conditions.
 - Drone used for view of inaccessible areas.
- Dispatch regularly updated with road conditions.
- Continued monitoring of staff requirement.
- Fire Department responded to a total of nine (9) emergency responses on January 11 and 12, 2020.
 - Three of these calls were related to weather including:
 - Flooding in structure - 2
 - Motor vehicle collision - 1

Communications Summary:

Below provides a summary of the Communication's team's involvement throughout the winter event:

The Communications staff posted warnings in advance on Friday afternoon. Posts included warnings and updates, retweets and posts from Environment Canada, Halton Police, Halton Hills Fire Department and Halton Region. Also posted, thanks to the many residents who sent words of thanks to our road crews. Message of support sent to residents of Newfoundland who are suffering from severe conditions.

Facebook:

- Total reach: 13,635 (number of people who would potentially have seen our posts)
- Engagement: 1,726 (likes, shares and comments on posts)
- Comments: 47 (including private messaging and repeated follow-ups on same)

Twitter:

- Impressions: 13,152 (number of people who potentially would have seen our tweets)
- Engagements: 330 (any action including comments, likes or shares of any tweet, and private messages for response)

Overall, positive messaging and thanks, though as expected frustrations as well.

CONCLUSION:

Public Works and Fire Services staff worked cohesively on a number of vigilant operations throughout the Town of Halton Hills first winter storm of 2020. Staff will continue to monitor and adjust their responsibilities as required to keep our roadways and community safe during the winter season.

Reviewed and approved by,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brent Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brent Marshall, Chief Administrative Officer