



City of Ontario, Oregon

Adam J. Brown, City Manager

Press Release

Citizen Information Regarding the Snow Emergency

January 11, 2017

At 11 AM this morning the City of Ontario requested that Malheur County declare a State of Emergency on behalf of the City of Ontario. Malheur County filed a Declaration of Emergency shortly thereafter. Legislators have been in communication with Governor Kate Brown in these efforts. The weather events we have experienced over the last few weeks has been unprecedented in recent history. We are working with all of our available assets to mitigate any devastating impacts of the snow.

There are things citizens can do to help the relief effort.

- If you are physically able to help dig out a storm drain on your road this will prevent water backups. City crews and those aiding them will be working on targeted drains, but if citizens are able to dig out drains in their neighborhoods this will greatly increase the relief effort. The City is working on putting a map online that will show where the storm drains are.
- If you have not already, don't bury fire hydrants or meters. Firemen are working on identifying hydrants with markers and digging some out. If you see one marked and can dig it out with a shovel, this will be very helpful. Make sure also to dig around meters on your own property.

There are things of which businesses should be mindful. Flat roofs with long spans are particularly vulnerable.

- The estimated weight load of the current snowfall is 15.5 lbs per square foot. You should add this to your existing weight load to see if your roof is stable. A normal commercial building roof is rated at 20-25 lbs per square foot. Adding the weight of the snow pack to the existing weight load will tell you if you should evacuate the space until the roof is cleared of snow. Most likely, flat roofs should be shoveled due to the volume and current weight of snow.
- Private companies should use a private engineer to reassess whether re-entry is safe.

Citizens with concerns about the weather event will be triaged at 541-881-3260. Your message will be sent to the appropriate person afterwards.

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