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Governor Christie: There's Gonna Be A Lotta Snow

Monday, January 26, 2015 Tags: [Other](#)



Governor Christie: There's Gonna Be A Lotta Snow

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXx1YQrbvLo>

Transcript:

Governor Christie: Good afternoon, everybody. Welcome. I just met with and was briefed by our state transportation and emergency response officials on the preparations being made to deal with the winter storm. First, let me say to everyone in New Jersey that this is going to be a significant storm with snow fall today and into tomorrow that will create really hazardous conditions – including dangerous conditions on our roadways. So I have declared a State of Emergency in New Jersey and I've authorized the early closing of government offices and the staggered dismissal of all nonessential state employees beginning at 1:00pm today. We want to get individuals home and off the roads as quickly as possible because as you know the storm will worsen as we get deeper into the day today and into the overnight hours. I want our first responders and transportation officials to be able to do their work safely so we want everybody to get home and get off the roads. I've already closed state offices for tomorrow due to the forecast, to allow our response and our transportation officials to do their work in an unimpeded way. This is a different kind of storm than we've had before and it's going to affect our state in different ways. Down in the southernmost part of the state, especially in the southeast we may have accumulations only as much as 6 inches. But we can have as much as 2 feet with blizzard conditions in our northeastern counties, as well as our coastal counties in Monmouth and Ocean and in Middlesex county. The worst conditions will be overnight tonight from 9:00 until around noon tomorrow, with lighter snowfall afternoon tomorrow expected to continue until about midnight. Again, this is going to present some very dangerous and difficult conditions on our roadways. There's going to be extremely colder temperatures than we're experiencing right now and the real potential for blowing and drifting snows given the winds. This is the first weather event of this magnitude this season, thank goodness, so I want to make sure everyone in New Jersey knows what steps we are taking to be ready and what we need from them. First, it's our expectation that with state offices and early school dismissals as well, the rush hour is probably going to be early this afternoon. So prepare yourself accordingly. It will not be, I think, the normal rush hour. As you are leaving work, picking up your children from school, and getting

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home – get off the roads as quickly as you can, obviously drive safely, drive cautiously. We want you to do that all the time but particularly now. Road crews are going to be out working to clear and salt the roads so we need everybody to get through the storm safely. If you do not have to drive, please remain home and remain off the roads. Since yesterday, NJDOT, NJ Transit, Turnpike, Parkway, and SJTA have been preparing equipment and putting staff and contractors on alert. This is a full statewide mobilization that's been ordered. We are prepared to clear snow and ice from roadways and transit facilities everywhere part of the State. We believe we have the manpower to be able to do so. NJDOT, Turnpike, Parkway and SJTA have nearly 3700 trucks ready to roll. They started spreading salt on roads yesterday and will continue to do so as conditions warrant. DOT is working with State Police to have tow trucks available to help clear disabled vehicles more quickly. In addition, NJDOT's Safety Service Patrols will be out there to help travelers and vehicles in distress. NJ TRANSIT of course, has equipped locomotives with plows and has tested and readied 750 switch heaters to allow trains to access all tracks and perform all usual movements. Obviously our top priority is passenger safety of the traveling public. Anyone planning to travel during the storm is urged to allow extra time and be extremely careful traveling in and around stations, on platforms and on-board trains, buses, light rail vehicles and Access Link vehicles. NJ TRANSIT plans to operate a regular weekday schedule on Monday, January 26 through Wednesday, January 28 and cross honoring is in effect. Due to the predicted severity of the storm, we're going to have some shut downs. We'll probably start shutdowns of transit at about 10 o'clock tonight. And I don't expect we'll have transit tomorrow but again it's as conditions warrant as we go forward. Customers are advised to regularly check njtransit.com for the latest service information. Residents should be prepared for potential power outages mostly due to high wind conditions. BPU President Mroz has been on conference calls with all the power and public utility companies and their leadership. They have begun to assemble essential personnel and additional crews here in New Jersey to be ready to respond to outages as they come forward. Residents should prepare themselves as usual for possible outages– including supplies of water, nonperishable food items, personal hygiene items, cold weather clothing and supplies, and a cellular phone, etc. And from all the reports I've seen, you've all seemed to have been to the supermarket in the last 24 hours and I don't know why the rush on bread, but what the heck. If you want more bread I'm sure you're able to get it. If you have a member of your family dependent on medications or electric-powered health equipment, make sure you have a plan to assist them. If your power goes out, your first contact should be to your power company so you are identified as an outage and they can work to restore your service as quickly as possible. BPU also is activating its Storm Cloud reporting system for power companies to collect outages and other information. BPU is posting on its website links to the utilities' Storm web pages for reporting of outages and obtaining outage information. We expect many schools to be closing early today and many schools to be closed tomorrow due to the weather. As always in these situations, you should check with their local school district for specific times on early dismissal today and for your local district's plan for tomorrow's school day regarding closure. The overall message is this everybody, we've been through this plenty of times before. I was at a hockey game yesterday in Bayonne of my son Patrick's and had a resident of Bayonne come to me and said are you worried about the storm? And I said this is my sixth winter as Governor, I've had double-digit states of emergency imposed for snow, we've had Hurricane Irene, we've had Hurricane Sandy, for better or for worse, we know how to deal with these situations. And I feel completely confident that the folks behind me and all the people that work for them are prepared but, you never know how bad these conditions are going to be. Here's one thing we know for sure: starting later this afternoon, you should stay home if you can. You should only go out in the case of an absolute emergency or necessity. And the same goes for all day tomorrow. We do not need people on the roadways, it makes it much more difficult for us to do our job. And if we get anywhere between 18 and 24 inches of snow, that's a lot of snow to move to make roadways passable and safe. We would like to make Wednesday productive for everybody. And the only way for us to make Wednesday productive is for you to give us the opportunity to do our job Tuesday and this evening. So please stay off the roads. It's not only for your own safety, it's for the operation of the state for us to be able to have the state be as fully operational as we can be on Wednesday and for the rest of the week. You should feel confident that myself and the Lt. Governor are engaged with all of the leadership throughout the state and local government. OEMS throughout every town in New Jersey have been engaged with by the BPU and by DOT and all the other leadership that we have. The Emergency Operations Center is activated by the State Police and was activated last night to exchange information so we all feel like we know how to do this. This is gonna be a lotta snow no matter how you add it up and so we're going to be challenged but we feel like we're prepared and we're ready and if you all stay home and help that will make things significantly safer for you and your family and significantly easier for the men and women who are going to be working hard to try to restore New Jersey to normalcy after the storm is over.

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