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Governor Christie: This Is Our 17th Snow Emergency, We Will Get Through It

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Governor Christie: This Is Our 17th Snow Emergency, We Will Get...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xeqxdx31g0Q>

Transcript:

Governor Christie: I want to thank the Mayor and thank all the folks here in Sayreville. Lieutenant Governor and I are happy to be here. I want to report to you on the current state of affairs across the state. I have been driving around the state for the last few hours and here is what we find. In the northern part of state we are in one of the heaviest snow bands right now from where we are right here in Sayreville up through the northern part of the state. So the snow is at its heaviest point so far today for the northern part of the state. So for the folks from here in Middlesex County, north all the way up to Bergen County, stay home. I have been saying that all day but you are in a particularly bad time right now. I was on the road for a couple of hours and saw a lot of people off the road. You know, not being able to move off exit ramps et cetera. So do not put yourself in a position, I do not care whether you have a four wheel drive vehicle or not. It is just very slippery out there right now and the snow is difficult and the visibility is no more than a quarter of a mile. So for anybody at home right now thinking this might be a good time to go out in the northern part of the state, it is not. So please do not. In the southern part of the state, we are seeing continued accumulations of snow. You know, I think we can wind up in that part of the state getting you know at least two feet of snow. I feel good, I was just at the Department of Transportation control center in Woodbridge. The roads are being cleared. They are passable for emergency vehicles. Let's please not put more vehicles out there. I saw a couple of snow plows on interstate 287 that were stopped because they were being blocked by vehicles that had gotten stuck. This just damages our ability to be able to get the roads clear. So we declared a state of emergency last night. We are asking you to stay off the roads. Please stay off the roads. But we're getting the roads cleared and not only here but the southern part of the state. At the Jersey Shore, we made it through the first high tide which was at 6:45 this morning. With most of the shore being in

very good shape. Some minor street flooding in the northern part of the shore. The only place where we are having any kind of significant street flooding is very, very far south in Cape May County. Places like Avalon and Stone Harbor and Sea Isle City we have some significant street flooding there. That water is receding and the information we are getting from the National Weather Service as now is that the high tide tonight will be less significant than the one this morning. And the one tomorrow morning will be even less significant than that. So for the folks down in Cape May County, I would say to all of you we are probably in as bad a shape now as you are going to be, it will get better as the day goes on. But we are going to continue to monitor that. The DEP Commissioner Bob Martin is working closely and been on the phone with the mayors down there directly to make sure we're communicating. This morning I had a phone conversation with all of the mayors in the state who wanted to sign on to the call. I think we had close to 300 mayors on the call. We gave them a full briefing on what the status was. That was about 8:30 this morning. If we need to have another one of the calls this evening, if circumstances change remarkably we will do that. On the power situation, so far so good. We have about 90,000 outages across the state. Most of those are focused in the southern and central part of the state. So the Atlantic City Electric area, down south has about 50,000 outages. And the JCP&L service area in the central part of the state has about 40,000 outages right now. We anticipate those will go up as the day goes on for three reasons. First, for the heavy wet nature of the snow. That will you know, lean on trees and trees come down and take down wires. That is a problem. Second, some fairly high winds. Now not quite as high winds as they were anticipating or forecasting earlier but still significant winds that will with heavy snow take down some of the wires. Third reason is that we're having some substation failures, especially down in the Atlantic City Electric area. That's good news though for those folks because if we can get those substations failures fixed much more quickly than the individual pole to pole work on wire work which we can't do until the winds subside because it's unsafe to put folks up into those bucket trucks. But on the substations we can do that. So for about 10,000 to 12,000 of the people without power in Cape May County, that's a substation problem and we hope to be able to have Atlantic City Electric getting that fixed relatively soon, hopefully before the end of the day today. For folks who lose power, please given how cold the weather is, try to go into shelter in the home a friend or family member if you can. Don't stay in the cold. If you don't have a family member or friend near, we have shelters open in every county in the State. They are ready to take people and keep them warm and get them fed and all the rest. So you can be able to do that. If you have trouble getting to one of the shelters, call your local police department. They'll work with you and coordinate in order to get you to one of the shelters if you need to be sheltered because of the cold. This is my 17th snow emergency in six years. So we know how to do this. I've been in constant contact with Governor Cuomo. We're making decisions regarding the roadways in the northern part of the State that lead into New York City in conjunction with the Governor. I just got off the phone with him. We're going to continue to evaluate this. There may come a time where we decide to close the Hudson River crossings because of the wind situation and because of the snow accumulation on both sides of those crossings both in the northern New Jersey side and in New York City. But that's a decision that Governor Cuomo and I will make over the course of the day but be sure that I've spoken to Andrew three times today. We're continuing to talk with each other regular basis, compare notes and make sure if there's any action that needs to be taken by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, that we'll be able to do that in a coordinated cooperative way as we always have. And so I've spoken, we've also made briefings available to the leadership of the Legislature. The Speaker and Senate President in the last 24 hours and so they're aware of what's going on as well. And we're of course obviously available to deal with those folks on as an needed basis. Lastly, I just say to everybody that, try not to buy into some of the you know, hyper talk that goes on at times around this stuff. If you stay inside, and stay warm, you're going to be fine. If you lose your you're power we have a place for you to go. But the biggest way to get in trouble today if you decide to go out and try to brave it yourself. Then we have to go get tow trucks out there to try to get you out of snow banks and it is very, very dangerous and slippery out there. So please refrain from doing that if you can. If you do, this whole thing will be over by late this evening in the north. By early evening in the south. And then we are looking for good weather tomorrow. Clear weather sunny weather, which will help to begin to melting some of the snow and in fact give us an opportunity to get everything cleaned up so we can be ready by Monday. I forgot to mention New Jersey Transit, obviously New Jersey Transit is closed now we closed it at 2:00 a.m. last night. That was predominantly for getting plows on the trains so that they can clear the snow off of the train tracks so that we can get a head start on trying to get ready for the Monday commute. We can't make any guarantees yet because we do not see what the full extent of the storm is. But I would hope that New Jersey Transit would be up and ready to go in time for people to make their commute on Monday morning. But we will update you on that as well.

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