

Media Release

February 26, 2013

8:00 PM

**NOTE** – Next release and update around 8:00 am on Wednesday

From the Offices of:

Emergency Management – Martina Pounds – (573) 489-4945

County of Boone – Presiding Commissioner Dan Atwill – (573) 268-6847

City of Columbia – Steven Sapp – (573) 239-5335

Boone County Fire Protection District – Division Chief Gale Bloomenkamp – (573) 219-0677

## **Second Major Winter Storm in a Week is Impacting Columbia and Boone County**

### **Road conditions improving, electrical outages continue in rural Boone County**

The second major winter storm in a week spread a heavy wet snow across all of Boone County this morning. Boone County, the City of Columbia, and emergency officials are continuing to urging the public to stay off roads Tuesday.

The National Weather Service has issued a Winter Weather Advisory for Columbia and Boone County until 12:00 noon on Wednesday and is forecasting between 1 and 3 inches of snowfall late tonight through Wednesday afternoon.

#### **Travel:**

- Travel conditions are improving. Road crews were able to make very good progress today and will continue plowing through the night.
- There could be an additional 1-3 inches of snow overnight. Motorist should watch for slickness during the morning commute on Wednesday. With temperatures forecast to drop below freezing tonight refreeze on roadways is likely. Motorist should use caution on the Wednesday commute.

#### **A message from Boone Electric:**

- We are grateful for our customer's patience and understanding during the winter storm and associated and continued power outages. Our staff and crews are working hard to answer your calls and to fully restore your power. We have forty incoming customer service lines and we know some of you have not been able to get through. Please know we are working on all outages and we encourage you to continue to use our customer service line at 573-449-4181.

## Situational Status:

- Emergency Medical System
  - Hospitals continue to report adequate personnel on duty and no issues.
- Fire
  - Reporting steady but normal call volume
  - Adequate personnel and equipment to respond to all calls.
  - Using 4-wheel drive vehicles to assist with responses if needed.
- Law Enforcement
  - Reporting normal call volume with few crashes throughout the day.
- Public Works / Road Crews
  - City of Columbia
    - Crews have completed both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> priority routes.
    - Crews have begun plowing residential streets.
      - Residents are urged to place cars in driveways or off the roads to allow plows to do more efficient work.
      - Crews will plow roads in each direction but not curb to curb so as to allow crews to plow as many roads as possible overnight.
      - Remember to shovel snow in driveways to the right side of your driveway as you are facing the street. This will help prevent, but not completely stop plows from pushing snow back in to driveways.
    - Columbia Transit will operate on Wednesday
    - Refuse and recycling pick up will resume Wednesday. All routes delayed one day.
    - Columbia Public Works will advise on Wednesday how limb and branch collection will occur.
  - County Public Works
    - Most major roads in the county have been plowed but not shoulder to shoulder perhaps.
    - Continue to grade gravel roads.

## **Government Operations:**

- City Offices will be open Wednesday.
- County of Boone
  - Boone County Offices will be open on Wednesday
  - Boone County Courts will be open on Wednesday

## **Utilities**

- City of Columbia
  - As of 5:00 PM all service has been restored.
  - If for some reason you don't have power, please call (573) 875-2555 to report the issue.
- Boone Electric
  - As of 8:00 PM, 7,800 customers are reported without power and crews are responding to calls.
  - 16 crews are currently out and working to restore power.
  - Report lines down or outages to (573) 449-4181. Additional personnel are answering phones so please be patient.

## **Safety**

- **Lines down**
  - Do not approach any line on the ground or hanging from a utility pole. Report all lines down to Columbia Water and Light or Boone Electric Coop. If a line is arcing, if a line is on a structure or vehicle, or there is visible smoke or fire, call 9-1-1.
  - Should someone come in contact with a live electrical line, do not touch them! Call 9-1-1 and stay clear of the line and the person.
  - Electric lines are normally the lines at the top of the pole. Cable and phone lines are lower on the pole but do not make assumptions.
- **Generators**
  - Safety information concerning generators can be found at this link - <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/fswy24.pdf>
- **Health**
  - This is a heavy and wet snow. Make sure you are in good physical condition before attempting shovel snow.
  - If while shoveling you feel tightness in your chest, sweating and/or nausea; stop and call 9-1-1.
  - Food safety is an issue for those without power for extended periods. Public Health and Human Services will be issuing food safety tips. Stay tuned for details.

- Keep refrigerators and freezers closed
- According to the FDA, food in refrigerators is safe up to four hours; food in freezers is safe up to 48 hours - AS LONG AS THEY REMAIN CLOSED
- If the power is out for longer than four hours, refrigerated food can be put into a cooler and set outside.
- Our Environmental Public Health Unit will work with affected food establishments to ensure food is safe. Food safety will depend upon the length of time the establishment was without power and whether or not the refrigerator and freezer doors remained closed.
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- **Private Services**

- Towing services
  - Ensure you get a price agreement before the tow is stated.
  - If you feel you are a victim of price gouging, call the Missouri State Attorney Generals Hotline at 1-800-392-8222
- Tree and limb removal
  - Ensure you are working with a reputable company and agree upon a price, in writing, before work is begun.
  - It is not certain that the Federal Emergency Management Agency will reimburse you for the cost – a disaster declaration has not been issued.
  - If you feel you are a victim of price gouging, call the Missouri State Attorney Generals Hotline at 1-800-392-8222

- **Social Media**

- Information can be reported via the following sites:
  - Our links for Emergency Management are:
    - Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/BooneCountyOEM>
    - Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/BooneCountyOEM>
  - City of Columbia
    - Public Works
      - Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/ColumbiaMissouriPublicWorks>
      - Twitter: [http://twitter.com/pub\\_works](http://twitter.com/pub_works)
    - City of Columbia main page
      - <https://www.facebook.com/pages/City-of-Columbia-Missouri-Govt-Page/115811635186687>
      - <https://twitter.com/GoColumbiaMO>