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Sussex County asks public for storm reports

Emergency managers trying to assess damage caused by heavy snowfall as preparations begin for new round of wintry weather

**FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**

**1730 Hours, Monday
Feb. 8, 2010**

Sussex County officials are asking residents and property owners with damage caused by this past weekend's snowstorm to report that information immediately so emergency planners can assess the extent of destruction wrought on the region.

Emergency Operations Center Director Joseph L. Thomas said some reports of poultry house collapses caused by the heavy, wet snow already have begun to filter in. The Sussex County EOC reminds residents, especially those in manufactured homes with flat roofs, to sweep or shovel snow from atop those structures as long as it is safe to do so.

"As we all begin the tall task of recovering from this historic storm, it is imperative that the public as soon as possible report to us the damage to their homes, businesses, farms and other properties," Mr. Thomas said. "That will give us a clearer picture of the damage that is out there."

Anyone who has damage should call the EOC's storm information hotline at (302) 856-7366. The public also can send photographs of storm damage to emergency officials. Visit www.sussexcountyde.gov/stormphotos to upload storm images.

DelDOT road crews and utility companies continued their efforts today to clear roads and restore power, this as another potentially significant winter storm approaches the mid-Atlantic region. The National Weather Service has issued a winter storm watch for Sussex County for Tuesday through Wednesday.

Road crews continue to battle snow drifts of two to four feet in some locations, while approximately 10,000 homes and businesses enter their third day without

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electricity. Utility crews from as far away as North Carolina are in the county working to repair damaged utility poles and downed lines.

Because of the remaining power outages and the deep cold affecting the county, in addition to the threat of more winter weather, shelters remain open at two locations to house those who have lost power. Those shelters are:

- Milford Middle School, 612 Lakeview Ave., Milford;
- Sussex Central High School, 26026 Patriots Way, Georgetown.

Residents in need of shelter should contact the Sussex County EOC storm information hotline at (302) 856-7366 for instructions. All shelter facilities have back-up generators in place, and staff is available to assist the public. However, those relocating to shelters should bring necessary supplies with them, including clothing, sleeping bags and pillows, medications, drinks, and non-perishable foods.

With additional snowfall and/or icy precipitation expected to fall in the next 48 hours, the Sussex County EOC urges the public to begin preparations now. “Right now, we have a window of opportunity,” Mr. Thomas said. “We need to use it.”

Residents should prepare themselves with basic household supplies, including extra food and water, first-aid supplies, flashlights and batteries, a battery-powered weather radio, extra prescription medicines, baby items, an emergency heat source and sufficient heating fuel.

The Sussex County EOC will continue to monitor forecasts for the impending storm and work closely with other local and state governmental agencies. Further updates will be issued should they become necessary.

For the latest list of road closures, visit the Delaware Department of Transportation Web site at www.deldot.gov. To view an up-to-date map of power outages in Sussex County, visit Delmarva Power’s Web site at www.delmarva.com and the Delaware Electric Cooperative’s Web site at www.delaware.coop.

For updates, stay tuned to local television and radio stations, and the Sussex County EOC Web site, at www.sussexcountyde.gov/services/storm.

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Media calls should be directed to EOC spokeswoman Debra Jones at (302) 855-7801 or Sussex County Chief of Public Information Chip Guy at pio@sussexcountyde.gov.