Residents should prepare for winter storm

NEWTON - A winter storm with major snow accumulation is expected this evening and tomorrow in Harvey County and the rest of south-central Kansas. Seven to 14 inches of snow accumulation is expected by Saturday, with winds exceeding 20 mph.

Such large accumulations of snow have the potential to cause numerous vehicle accidents, widespread power outages and structural damage.

Residents are encouraged to remain at home and take the following measures to protect themselves and others:

- If you have to leave home, use caution when driving. Traffic signals may be out and power lines and tree limbs down on roadways.
- Check on neighbors and elderly and disabled individuals who may be home alone.
- Keep a flashlight, battery-operated radio and extra batteries close at hand.
- Do not attempt to remove downed tree limbs near power lines.

If you should lose power in your home:

- Minimize living quarters to a small area, preferably near a heat source such as a fireplace or wood-burning stove, and close all other doors.
- If using a space heater or other heat source, make sure it is intended for home heating and ensure proper ventilation to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

If widespread power outages occur, emergency shelters may be established for those unable to remain at home. Stay tuned for more information as it becomes available.

Call 911 for emergencies only. To report electrical outages, call Westar Energy at (800) 544-4857. If traffic accidents do not involve injuries, alcohol or drugs, exchange information with other drivers and report the accident in person at the Newton Police Station, 120 E. Seventh St.

Stay tuned to radio and other media for updated information as it becomes available.

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Erin McDaniel  Public Information Officer
(316) 284-6055   (316) 284-6090
emcdaniel@newtonkansas.com