

Storm Report #1 – Tuesday Afternoon January 21 (4:30pm)

(Smyrna) –

(Smyrna) – Delaware Governor Jack Markell declared a State of Emergency and Level 1 Driving Warning today for the entire state. Governor Markell had previously ordered state offices closed at noon, sending all non-essential personnel home.

The Delaware Code defines a Level 1 Driving Warning in this manner: “Level 1 Driving Warning: A “Level 1 Driving Warning” shall mean that any person operating a motor vehicle when a Level 1 Driving Warning has been activated shall exercise extra caution in the operation of their motor vehicle. Nonessential employees, regardless of whether employed by a public or private entity, are encouraged not to operate a motor vehicle on the State’s roadways when a Level 1 Driving Warning has been activated, unless there is a significant safety, health or business reason to do so.”

Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) officials, along with other emergency response agencies across the state are monitoring the snowstorm that is making its way through Delaware. The National Weather Service (NWS) posted a Winter Storm Warning that is in effect until 6am, Wednesday, January 22. NWS forecasters say that as much as 8-14 inches of snow could fall in New Castle County, 4-8 inches in Kent and much of Sussex County, with 6-8 inches in southern Sussex County.

The weather conditions bring two problems to the state – snow accumulations and high winds. High winds will cause patchy areas of snow and ice, along with drifts on roadways. Drivers should use extreme caution throughout the storm period. The other problem is the extreme cold associated with this weather. Temperatures will drop overnight across the state,

and by morning, wind chills could register around -7 degrees Fahrenheit. Those venturing outside should dress appropriately as hypothermia is a possible danger. Pets should be sheltered or brought indoors.

Roads were pre-treated by the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) with brine, a water and salt mixture, as early as Monday in anticipation of the snowstorm. DelDOT crews are currently salting roadways. Road conditions statewide will worsen as the snow and wind continue. Motorists should reduce speeds appropriately based on road conditions. Delaware State Police are reporting wet and slippery roads across the state, with some roadways snow covered. State Police are also reporting numerous traffic accidents across Delaware.

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