



To Our Citizens

As you know, we are anticipating a significant winter weather event. In preparation for this event. Lt. O'Neal and Lt. Acree have been working with our local emergency response partners to ensure that we are able to mitigate potential hazards arising from this event. We have placed all staff on standby and assigned overtime to personnel who will be needed to cover the event. We will be keeping track of the expenses associated with our response and will work to submit those to the county EMA director to see if we qualify for reimbursement. I will keep the city manager updated on this.

Additionally, our public works personnel will be on standby to assist with opening roadways that may become hazardous. Please refrain from travelling once this event begins. Our resources will be heavily taxed already. We don't need sight-seers adding to the problem. Please use social media and whatever contacts you have to notify friends and family of our request not to travel.

Because the number of automobile related accidents may exceed our capabilities to work these accidents, we will be providing drivers with SR-13's, which are an exchange of information form they complete and submit to their insurance provider. We will not be able to dedicate personnel to working minor accidents once the volume surpasses resource capabilities. This is another reason to encourage folks not to drive.

Our intentions are to leave vehicles that have left the roadway and are not posing a hazard to motorists untouched. We will tag each vehicle we see to indicate that it has been checked and that no one is stranded in the vehicle. Once the road conditions have improved, we will give motorists time to have their vehicles removed by their own towing service. If however, we still have vehicles left unattended after the roads are opened and the weather threat has passed we will act according to state law and have the vehicles removed from the right-of-way.

Finally, in case you were unaware, the City of Hiram has no ability to provide back-up power to any of our buildings. This means that in the event of a power outage, we will lose heat and be unable to open our Community Center as a resource to stranded motorists or our citizens who lose power. We will be attempting to transport stranded motorists to the Senior Center in Dallas.

I am confident that together all of the first responders working on this event will be able to succeed in getting us through this with minimal inconvenience. It is truly impressive to watch our EMA, fire, police, and rescue personnel come together in times like these. We are very fortunate to work and live among some very professional and talented men and women. My hat's off to them (not literally though, it's too cold on my ears).

Take care and stay safe, see you all when this is over.

***Todd A. Vande Zande***

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