

# Regional Emergency Support Function #15 (External Affairs) Winter Weather Briefing

Tony Castrilli, Director Fairfax County Office of Public Affairs November 6, 2017

### **The BIG Storms!**



Snowpocalypse - Dec. 2009



#### Snowzilla - Jan. 2016

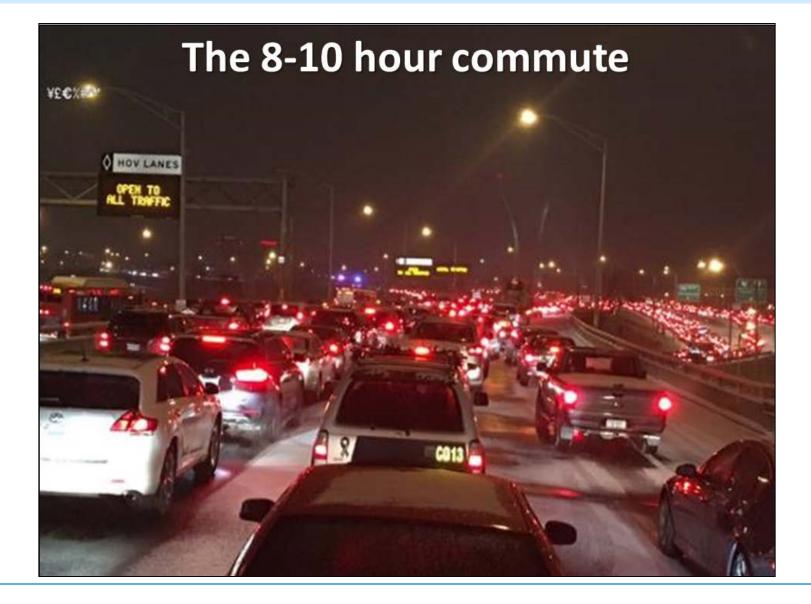


Snowmageddon - Feb. 2010



Snowquester - March 2013

### No Names – Just Nasty



# **Potential Winter Commuting Hazard**

#### Recipe for Traffic Disaster

- 1" or less of snow
- During urban rush hour
- Sub-freezing road temperatures
- Together, these often create a traffic disaster.

#### But typically...

Road crew's plan & response time > "Confident forecast" lead time



# **Potential Winter Commuting Hazard**

Enhanced NWS-DOT/DPW Communications

- NWS may not have confidence with enough lead time, but they can often see the threat
- NWS will now notify DOTs/DPWs of the threat of "traffic disaster ingredients" combining:
  - > 1" or less of snow
  - During urban rush hour
  - Sub-freezing road temperatures



# **Potential Winter Commuting Hazard**



With DOT Notification Calls ~24 hours in Advance

...POTENTIAL WINTER COMMUTING HAZARD STATEMENT FOR THE WASHINGTON METRO AREA TUESDAY MORNING...

There is a POSSIBILITY for icy commuting conditions Tuesday morning. A period of snow is POSSIBLE (30%) across the Washington metro area during rush hour, with up to an inch of snow accumulation possible on sub-freezing roads.

If this threat does materialize during Tuesday morning rush hour, untreated roads would turn icy. This could lead to hazardous commuting conditions, with extensive delays.

The most important action at this point is to stay informed. Know what you would do if this threat materializes and plan accordingly. Stay tuned for updates and possible winter weather advisories.

# **Regional Messaging Approach**

- Common message, many voices
- RESF 15 producing general messages for the region
  - General messages throughout the season
  - Event-specific messages during weather events
  - Jurisdictions can localize these for their communities
- Coordinated campaign throughout the region
- Communicators will utilize multiple platforms, social media, local websites, regular media and more





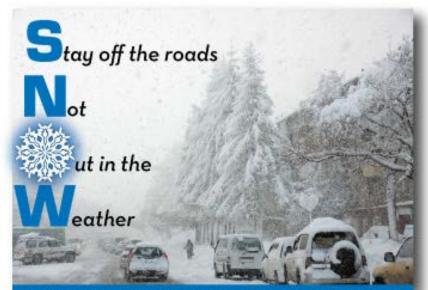


# Winter Weather Information Campaign

- Kicking off this month with social media messages
- Will continue throughout the season

#### Designed to

- Educate
- Inform
- Remind



Get Where You Need to Be Before the Weather Gets Bad!



# **Sample Messaging Topics**

- Be Aware
  - Sign up for your jurisdiction's alert system to receive up-to-theminute details about emergencies
- Make a Kit
  - A home <u>and</u> car kit should contain basic emergency supplies for you, your family and pets
- Have a Plan
  - Everyone should have a family emergency plan
  - Know your work and/or school's emergency plan
- Stay Informed
  - Listen to local media for information and instructions from emergency officials
  - Be aware of winter storm watches and warnings, as well as road conditions
  - Get where you need to be before the weather gets bad

# **Sample Messages**

#### Twitter

- Winter is coming...be ready. Build a kit, make a plan and stay informed. <u>http://go.usa.gov/7Jp4</u> #prep4winter
- Your family may not be together when a storm strikes; make a family communication plan. <u>http://go.usa.gov/7JHx</u> #prep4winter
- Rain, sleet and snow. Know your winter weather lingo. #prep4winter

#### Facebook

- Winter is coming....be ready. Winter storms can bring freezing rain, ice, snow and high winds. Prepare now by building a kit, making a plan and staying informed. <u>http://go.usa.gov/7Jp4</u> #prep4winter
- "When the Sky Turns Gray," it is time to get prepared! Watch the animation to learn what actions you can take today! <u>http://goo.gl/zeqPm1</u> #prep4winter





# **Additional Messages**

#### Twitter

- Avoid freezing pipes. Insulate pipes and allow faucets to drip during cold weather. <u>http://rdcrss.org/1gCLgyn</u> #prep4winter
- What is in your car emergency supply kit? <u>http://www.ready.gov/car</u> #prep4winter

#### Facebook

 Are you ready for winter's stormy weather? This infographic will give you some ideas on how to prep yourself, car and home for winter storms. <u>http://1.usa.gov/1f0EotG</u> #prep4winter



### **Keys to Success**

Common Message, Many Voices

Weather Hype < Credibility</p>

Communicate Your Preparedness





### It's Just Snow

#### Tell your story...





