



After Action Report

Winter Storm 2016

BY: James Brann

Chief of Emergency Services

February 2, 2016

Brief Description: Essex County received its first winter storm of 2016. Snow began to fall on Friday, January 22nd @ 11:00 a.m. ending on Saturday @ 12:00 a.m., January 23rd. Due to the large amount of snow accumulation and snow drifts caused by high winds road conditions became dangerous for motorist to travel and caused emergency response delays due to the dangerous road conditions. Essex Count Government and Essex County Schools were closed and/or on delay according to their policy.

MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Rod Gordon	Social Services
Sue Swann	Social Services
Brook Jenkins	Social Services
Stanley Clarke	Essex County Sheriff's
Reese Peck	Essex County Administrator
Fred Mitchell	Facilities Manager
David Broad	PIO
Prue Davis	Emergency Services Director
Jimmy Brann	Chief of Emergency Services
John Magruder	Essex County Board of Supervisor
John Hayes	TEVFD Chief
Joey Reinhardt	TEVFD President
Scott Burckbuckler	Essex County School System
Jimmy Sydnor	Acting Tappahannock Town Manager
Jim Ashworth	Tappahannock Police Chief

Staffing:

EMS	Normal Staffing with three volunteers on duty for 36hrs
Fire	Station 1 - 4 to 6 firefighters on duty Station 2 2 firefighters on duty Station 3 2 firefighters on duty
Sheriff's Office	Normal staffing

Tappahannock Police Normal staffing

Call Volume by Agency

January 22- January 26

Agency	Total Calls
EMS	21 (Medical & Trauma)
Fire	16
EMS Assist 7 Fire 9 (MVA, Smoke in building, Faulty smoke detector)	
Essex County Sheriff's Office	43
Motor Vehicle Accidents 6 Disable Vehicles 19 Miscellaneous 18	
Tappahannock Town Police	28
Motor Vehicle Accidents 6 Disable Vehicles 3 Miscellaneous 19	
Essex County Animal Shelter	4

Total of 112 calls through the 911 dispatch center that are logged in the CAD system. (All information was retrieved from the CAD system.)

Citizen Request:

- Jan 23rd, Citizen requested help getting to dialysis appointment in King George, appointment date Sunday Jan 24th
Actions Taken:
Made contact with Tappahannock dialysis center employee Saturday night, Jan 23rd and arranged for the citizen to make direct contact with the dialysis center employee to make arrangements to have her dialysis on Monday, Jan 25th at the Tappahannock location. Transportation was arranged to get the citizen to her appointment and back home, if needed.
- Jan 24th, Citizen requested information regarding residential snow removal.
Actions Taken:
Citizen received names and phone numbers of people equipped to handle residential snow removal.
- Jan 25th, Citizen requested help with communicating with VDOT on secondary road conditions in her neighborhood.

Actions Taken:

Phone call made to VDOT supervisor, road was plowed within an hour.

Shelters:

County Emergency Shelter was closed due to no request.

ECHO Shelter was open, there were 0 to 3 or 4 guest throughout the storm event.

Actions Taken:

- There were plans in place to open a shelter if there were power outages lasting 8hrs or longer.
- Primary shelter would be located at the Essex County Intermediate School
- Secondary Shelter will be located at First Baptist Church, Loretto
- If the county is faced with a power outage at both the primary and secondary shelters we will partner with Richmond County Emergency Services to relocate our shelter staff and guest to the Richmond County Shelter

Essex County Public School System:

- Closed 5 days
- Reopened Thursday, January 28th, 3hr delay

Essex County Social Services:

- Friday, January 22nd, early release
- Monday, January 25th, closed

Essex County Local Government:

- Friday, January 22nd, early release
- Monday, January 25th, 2hr delay or use liberal leave

Power Outages:

No Power outages reported to Dispatch center.

Dominion Power and Rappahannock Electric had crews on stand-by in case of power outages.

Communications:

Communications were handled via phone, text, email, and/or face to face.

- State Situational Reports were provided
- Local Situation Reports were provided
- Weather Reports were provided

- Good communications between department heads, agencies, and local government leaders
- All reports turned in on time to the State EOC
- Good communications with citizens
- CODE RED used for the first time (Good feedback from citizens received)
- Emergency Management Face Book Page provided updates during the storm and safety tips(over 8000 contacts, reported by David Broad)
- Emergency Management Web Page Blog was providing updated storm information and safety tips
- WNNT & WRAR provided updated storm information and PSA regarding health related concerns residential snow removal
- Dispatchers done a good job with calling VDOT and having them respond on emergency calls on secondary roads

Storm Related Incidents:

- Chief 5, stuck in the snow while assisting sheriff's office with getting night dispatcher on duty
- Brush 1, stuck in the snow while on a call
- Two Virginia State police vehicles stuck in the snow
- Several VDOT vehicles stuck in the snow

Damage Assessment:

- Water gutters on the back side of the sheriff's office were pulled down by the heave snow sliding off the roof.

Concerns

- Essex County Employee's experienced difficulties getting to work (unable to get out of their driveways, bad road conditions, no transportation)
- Essex County Shelters are not equipped to provide heating and cooling (generator does not have the KW's to run the heating and air at the Essex Intermediate School, working with Brad Hall to come up a solution)
- ECHO (homeless shelter) First Baptist Church not equipped with a generator
- Volunteer fire staffing limited (Identify resources to assist EMS and not deplete fire resources in case of a fire)

Future Planning Needs:

- Identify recourses for residential snow removal. Post on county web page and have list available to dispatchers in case of citizens calling for such information
- Identify volunteer resource list to assist county employee's on getting to work (i.e. Social services workers to emergency shelter)
- Provide overnight accommodations for county employee's living outside of the county or not having transportation to work
- Identify if there is a need for a county employee shelter
- Work on updating generator at Essex Intermediate School so it will be fully functional to provide heating and cooling in case of a power outage
- Work with ECHO (homeless shelter) on being a secondary shelter and assist them with a generator disconnect box
- Identify other county and/or state resources to assist EMS during bad weather conditions

Summary:

During the recent January 22nd - 25th winter storm event Essex County received an estimated 16 to 18 inches of snow accumulation with snow drifts caused by high winds. Essex County citizen's found it difficult to travel due to dangerous road conditions. The dangerous road conditions also caused first responders to face emergency response delays as well. With help from VDOT plowing the secondary roads ahead of the EMS units responding on emergency calls and receiving assistance from Tappahannock/Essex Volunteer Fire Department all calls got answered and our citizens were rendered the best care possible.

During the winter storm event the Essex County 911 Dispatch Center received 112 calls. Police, Fire, and EMS responded to a 112 calls in a safe manner.

Local government and the Essex County School System had delays and closures due to storm conditions. Schools reopened on Thursday, Jan 28th.

Plans were in place to open a warming shelter if needed at the Essex County Intermediate School with the ECHO Shelter (First Baptist Church) identified as a secondary shelter in case of

power outages. A joint shelter plan was in place as well with Richmond County Emergency Services because of the felicitities they have on generator. There were no request from Essex County citizens for a warming shelter because of no reported power outages. Social Services Staff were ready for duty if needed.

Citizen request were met in a timely manner by staff on duty, and follow up calls back to citizens making sure their request have been taken care of were made by EM Chief.

Minor incidents during the storm, vehicles stuck in the snow. No vehicles damaged, no equipment missing or broken, no injuries or deaths reported. The only damage reported, water gutters on the rear of the Sheriff's Office was pulled down by the heavy snow.

Feedback receive from those attending the After Action Review, communications between departments, agencies, and local government leaders met expectations. Concerns were addressed and comments noted in the comment section of this report. Future planning needs such as resources, manpower, and facilities were discussed and noted in the Future Planning needs section.

It's my opinion all citizens needs were taken care of by a group of professional agencies/departments working together as a team to provide a service above and beyond expectations.