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Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

Unified Regional Snow Emergency Plan

For The Metropolitan Washington Area

Winter Season

2015 / 2016

Last Updated: Monday, January 04, 2016

Unified Regional Snow Emergency Plan For the Metropolitan Washington Area Winter Season – 2015/2016

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**UNIFIED REGIONAL SNOW EMERGENCY PLAN
FOR THE
METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AREA**

Winter Season - 2015/2016

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to facilitate coordination and collaboration between agencies in the metropolitan Washington region in an effort to minimize weather-related disruption to public safety and welfare, business, and commerce throughout the region between the dates of October 15th and April 15th each year. The method for achieving this goal of minimum disruption is for all snow response agencies in the metropolitan area to communicate, coordinate, consult, and cooperate with each other in snow emergency matters, such as open/close decisions, common public messages, and demand management during the response and recovery phases.

2. ASSUMPTIONS

This plan was developed using the following assumptions:

This plan addresses only **regional** coordination to severe winter snow and ice storms. Local plans are assumed to be in place for responding to specialized local conditions.

All local jurisdictions, state, and federal agencies will retain their **prerogative of self-determination** in selecting an appropriate response to any emergency encountered. However, for the overall well-being of the metropolitan area, each jurisdiction and agency is encouraged to communicate, coordinate, cooperate, and consult, as required, with surrounding jurisdictions/agencies to prevent working at cross purposes.

Each response agency can effectively **carry out its responsibilities** within its jurisdiction for snow and ice control, i.e., it possesses the equipment, personnel, each participating agency to determine its ability to meet the guidelines. Any deficiency immediately will be brought to the attention of that jurisdiction's or agency's governing body for resolution. If resolution of the deficiency is beyond the capability of the jurisdiction or agency, then it should be raised to the next higher level within the state or federal government for possible assistance.

Jurisdictions and **agencies** are expected to **coordinate their response operations** in the vicinity of inter-jurisdictional boundaries and on bridges. The timing, direction, and number of lanes to be plowed should be coordinated among all concerned agencies to prevent choke points.

The **primary focus** of any jurisdiction's snow operations is clearing **snow emergency routes**. The first priority among the snow emergency routes is clearing major arterial roads, followed by secondary feeder roads, and ultimately residential areas.

Mutual aid is expected to be very **limited** during winter storms. Agencies are free to request mutual aid from their neighbors but the expectation of it being provided would be low, especially during storms with significant amounts of snowfall. All snow response agencies initially will be simultaneously engaged in snow operations and not capable of providing mutual aid. Liability issues concerning potential damage from operating large plows outside one's home jurisdiction provide a formidable challenge to offering mutual aid. If mutual aid were possible, it would be several days into the storm, or during a particular storm that was not region-wide. If provided, it would most likely be in the form of providing supplies, such as salt, rather than equipment. If equipment and crews were requested, the aid would most likely be used at or just across jurisdictional boundaries rather than in the core area of the requesting jurisdiction.

Federal government agencies in the metropolitan Washington area do not possess a reserve of snow removal equipment and therefore are **not in a position to assist local governments**. The Corps of Engineers or the military bases, GSA, and the National Park Service do not have snow removal equipment that can be assigned to a specific local area to relieve a local government of plowing responsibility. Federal agencies rely a great deal on private contractors to assist in snow removal.

Any **expansion** needed for increased snow operations must come from either redistributing organizational assets within a geographical area, going to the **private sector** and contracting with contract plow operators, or leasing/renting equipment from commercial rental companies.

3. GEOGRAPHICAL AREA COVERED BY PLAN

This plan applies to all local, state, and federal roads located within the political boundaries of the 22 local governments (*Charles County was added to COG on December 8, 2011 and is the 22nd and newest member government*) that are members of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and the agencies that maintain them, as well as transit agencies operating within the same area.

4. DECLARATION OF A SNOW EMERGENCY

There is no uniform procedure for declaring a snow emergency throughout the metropolitan area. For counties and large incorporated cities in the metropolitan Washington area the following persons or agencies make the declaration:

District of Columbia	The Mayor, in consultation with the Director of Public Works, declares a snow emergency
Maryland State	The Maryland State Police, in consultation with the State Highway Administration, declares a snow emergency for state roads only
Montgomery County	The Chief Administrative Officer declares a snow emergency for county roads
Prince George's County	The Chief Administrative Officer declares a snow emergency for county roads
Frederick County	Follows the recommendation of the Maryland State Police
Charles County	The Commissioner President signs the Declaration of Emergency

City of College Park	The City Manager or Director of Public Works makes the declaration.
City of Rockville	The City Manager or Designee makes the Declaration.
City of Takoma Park	The City Manager or Designee makes the Declaration.
Fairfax County	There is no legal requirement for a declaration of a local (snow) emergency before roads are plowed or snow emergency routes are enforced. As a general rule, VDOT maintains roads for which it has maintenance responsibility, and the County maintains roads for which it has maintenance responsibility.
City of Alexandria	The City Manager or his designee declares for city streets
Arlington County	The County Manager or designee declares for roads the County plows.
City of Gaithersburg	The City Manager or Designee makes the declaration.
City of Fairfax	The City Manager declares.
City of Manassas	The City Manager declares.
City of Manassas Park	The City Manager declares.

5. SNOW EMERGENCY ROUTES

Each jurisdiction or agency by local code designates which arteries are categorized as snow emergency routes. *A snow emergency route is generally any road where stopping and parking are not permitted in order to maintain the flow of traffic for public safety purposes and to permit snow plows unimpeded access to the roadway.* For purposes of this plan, by reference, each jurisdiction's snow emergency routes are incorporated as the network of snow emergency routes that this plan strives to keep open during all winter storms. Because of the difficulty of keeping up with changes to any and all lists of snow emergency routes, maps depicting these routes will not be produced.

6. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

Plan Implementation and Termination

Implementation - A weather forecast calling for one (1) or more inches of snow or any accumulation of ice in the metropolitan Washington area will initiate this plan.

Termination - This plan will be terminated when all snow emergency declarations have been cancelled.

7. SNOW OPERATION PHASES

The concept of operations is to take selected actions in four distinct phases of snow operations in response to expected or actual snow, sleet, or ice accumulation. These snow phases are identified as: **Alert, Readiness, Operations, and Recovery**.

A. Phase 1 – **ALERT PHASE**

Alert Phase - Step 1.

National Weather Service (NWS) Notice of Winter Storm Watch, Winter Storm Warning, or Winter Weather Advisory within the Capital Beltway

The Baltimore/Washington Forecast Office of the National Weather Service will alert COG's Public Safety Personnel [Dennis Bailey at 202-962-3269 (Office), 202-441-9104 (Cell); or Dave McMillion at 202-962-3708 (Office), 240-475-4145 (Cell) - (in this order)] / or alternatively, DC/HSEMA of the potential or expectation for one or more inches of snow (2 inches outside of weekday rush hours) or of any amount of ice. If COG staff is unreachable, the D.C. Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA) at 202-727-6161 or 202-673-7643 will act in COG's absence.

Alert Phase - Step 2.

NWS Issues Winter Storm Watch, Winter Storm Warning, or Winter Weather Advisory Over NAWAS/WAWAS

As weather conditions warrant, the Baltimore/Washington Forecast Office will issue a Winter Storm Watch or Warning or Winter Weather Advisory over the National Alert Warning System (NAWAS) and its regional circuit, the Washington Area Warning System (WAWAS). Local answering points on WAWAS, following internal procedures, should immediately notify key personnel of the approaching storm. Local jurisdictions/agencies that subscribe to commercial weather services may also be alerted from these sources. Another source of information on changing weather conditions is the local roadway weather information systems in use throughout the metropolitan area.

Alert Phase - Step 3.

Conference Call Notification

The regional teleconference call (*see [Appendix A-1, Page 18](#)*) enables federal agencies to anticipate local needs in an emergency and informally set out to resolve them within the parameters of federal law, with the understanding that local governments must eventually go through formal channels to include their state emergency management agencies.

Representatives from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) also participate on the call to gather information on which to base their open/close decision.

Using the RICCS, COG staff (or HSEMA, if COG is unavailable) will alert Snow Call participants that a call will take place at 3:00am the following morning. Snow call

participants should include the NWS, OPM, the Office of National Capital Region Coordination, local emergency managers, VDEM, MEMA, DC/HSEMA, departments of transportation, WMATA bus and rail officials, local transit officials, utilities, the National Park Service, and the Maryland and Virginia State Police. The list of participants will be maintained by COG and updated yearly, typically in October.

B. Phase 2 - READINESS

Readiness Phase - Step 1.

Activation of Operations/Snow Centers

The Readiness Phase begins at the conclusion of the Winter Storm Watch/Warning broadcast over WAWAS, or the COG conference call, whichever occurs sooner. Local jurisdictions and agencies should consider taking management actions to place operations centers/ snow centers and key personnel on telephone standby or begin minimum staffing. Work/shift schedules should be set up and contract plow operators should be alerted for possible service.

Readiness Phase - Step 2.

Deployment/Positioning of Equipment

Local jurisdictions and agencies should consider fully staffing operations centers/snow centers; having contract plow operators report to assigned locations; mounting plows and spreaders; loading abrasives and chemicals needed in the initial phase of operations; and positioning vehicles on assigned routes.

Readiness Phase - Step 3.

Pre-Dawn / (3:00 a.m.) Regional Conference Call (*Pre AM News*)

COG will conduct a regional conference call at 3:00 a.m., or at a time to be determined the evening prior, when appropriate, to receive an updated forecast on the storm and on the status of preparations. The structure of conference calls will follow a particular format to exchange information in the most expeditious fashion (see Appendix A-2).

C. Phase 3 - OPERATIONS PHASE

Operations Phase - Step 1.

Treatment and Monitoring

During the operations phase, jurisdictions and agencies should consider the spreading of abrasives and/or anti-icing chemicals at appropriate times. Icing conditions, such as sleet and freezing rain, pose a significant hazard to roadways in the metropolitan area. Many agencies in the metropolitan Washington area operate roadway weather information system/sensors that provide valuable site-specific weather information at the road surface, below the surface, and immediately above the road surface. Besides reporting temperatures, these systems also provide wind direction and speed and can provide forecasts if this feature is purchased. Because many of these sensors are

located on elevated surfaces, they are especially good for dealing with icing conditions. Special attention should be given to elevated surfaces such as bridges and ramps.

Operations Phase - Step 2.

Plowing

Local jurisdictions and agencies should consider plowing operations whenever abrasives and chemical applications become ineffective because of depth of snow or low temperatures. The immediate goal of plowing should be to make roads "passable^a," followed by "bare pavement," and then "curb to curb" clearing as time and resources permit.

Plowing Priorities

Initially, plowing should be concentrated on established snow emergency routes or chemical routes or whatever name is given to the highest priority routes for snow clearing by each jurisdiction. In order to restore the regional road network to normal operations as quickly as possible following a storm, the following priorities are established:

ROAD PLOWING PRIORITIES

- 1st Priority* - **Interstate highways and ramps** (I-95, I-66, I-70, I-270, I-295, I-395, I-370, I-495)
- 2nd Priority* - **U.S. numbered highways** (US Rte. 1, 15, 29, 40, 50, 301)
- 3rd Priority* - **National Park Service Parkways** (Rock Creek, B-W, G-W, Suitland, Clara Barton)
- 4th Priority* - **Limited or controlled access highways.** (Dulles Access, Dulles Toll Rd, Greenway)
- 5th Priority* - **Access to essential public transit facilities to include parking lots**
- 6th Priority* - **Most state routes under #800**
- 7th Priority* - **Unnumbered arterials** crossing jurisdictional boundaries
- 8th Priority* - **Major intra-jurisdictional arterial streets**
- 9th Priority* - **Bus stops and turn lanes**
- 10th Priority* - **Residential neighborhoods**

Recognizing that in those areas of the National Capital Region where states, counties, towns, and/or cities are arrayed on a three-tier basis for plowing, all priorities may be engaged simultaneously. Furthermore, it is assumed that priority roads will not be FULLY cleared prior to moving to the next priority, but rather cleared enough to safely travel on the roads. As a general rule however, response agencies will not get into residential areas until interstates, and primary and secondary roads are cleared.

To ensure the safety of pedestrians, it is recommended that priority be given to the rightmost lanes in order to provide access to bus stops and crosswalks.

^a "Passable" is an 8-10 foot path that is drivable *with caution*; it may be snow packed and/or rutted.

Plowing Coordination

Where roadways cross jurisdictional boundaries and on interstate bridges, response agencies should coordinate their operations to ensure the roadway is plowed at approximately the same time, in the same direction, and for the same number of lanes to prevent choke points/bottlenecks. To facilitate this coordination, a list of key personnel in snow response agencies and their phone numbers is provided in [Appendix A-3](#) (page 23)

Operations Phase - Step 3.

Parking Restrictions/Ticket and Towing/Odd-Even Side Parking

All jurisdictions and agencies should consider declaring snow emergencies and instituting parking bans on snow emergency routes at an appropriate time before/during a storm and in sufficient time to publicize the ban in advance of the start time. Equally important is ticketing and towing vehicles that fail to comply with the ban. Jurisdictions should always encourage vehicle owners to park in their driveways or on the same side of the street during a storm in order to give plows more room to work in clearing the street. One recommended scheme is to promote parking on the even numbered side of the street in even numbered years and on the odd numbered side in odd numbered years.

Operations Phase - Step 4.

Bus and Rail Operations

Metrobus and local bus systems should develop alternative routes that closely parallel the snow emergency routes in the jurisdictions in which they operate in order to take advantage of the commitment to keep these snow emergency routes open. Limited bus service is provided on portions of regional snow emergency routes as existing local conditions permit. Generally, alternative routes will avoid hilly areas and cause riders to walk greater distances to major intersections. Bus stops are considered part of the sidewalk, and therefore the responsibility of the jurisdiction or property owner, based on local ordinance. Local and state plowing agencies are encouraged to assist with bus stop clearing as time and staffing permit.

Rail systems are assumed to possess sufficient equipment for clearing rail beds and rail yards of snow in less severe storms. A combination of snow removal and de-icing equipment, certain operating procedures (polishing), and unrestricted rights of way can keep rail systems operating when roadways are struggling to remain passable. However, at some point in very severe storms (generally 8” of snow or more) even rail systems may need to restrict above-ground operations and eventually all operations if snow levels continue to increase. On the Metrorail system if only the underground segments are operating, service will be limited to:

UNDERGROUND RAIL OPERATIONS

<u>Red Line:</u>	Grosvenor/Medical Center to Union Station
<u>Blue Line:</u>	Ballston to Stadium Armory
<u>Orange Line:</u>	Ballston to Stadium Armory

Green Line: Fort Totten to Congress Heights

Yellow Line: Pentagon to Crystal City shuttle

Local and/or state response agencies should assign a high priority to clearing the access roads to public transportation facilities. Bus stops should be included as time and resources permit, and as the storm abates. To the extent possible, they should be cleared as roadways are cleared. Rail and bus systems and their facilities take on added significance during storms as commuters are asked to use public transportation and leave their cars at home, at Metro, or at other Park-and-Ride facilities. Jurisdictions should encourage customers to dress appropriately, walk to a bus stop on a main arterial, and expect lengthy delays.

Operations Phase - Step 5.

Sidewalks

Local governments should remind homeowners and businesses of local ordinances regarding who is responsible for clearing sidewalks/walkways around their property. In most cases, the property owner is required to clear the sidewalks/walkways within 24 hours of the end of snow accumulation. Clearing sidewalks is important to prevent injuries to schoolchildren and to adults using public transportation, who might otherwise be forced to walk on narrow roadways and compete with motor vehicles for space. **Plowing agencies should avoid piling snow on sidewalks, bus stops, and intersections where pedestrians cross, to the extent possible.**

Operations Phase - Step 6.

Contract Plowing

The flexibility that response agencies need to deal with storms of different intensities can be obtained by contracting with the private sector for additional snow removal equipment and the personnel to operate the equipment. Competition for these scarce resources can be keen when a large number of agencies are vying for these services at the same time. Regional cooperation is needed in order to share these limited resources.

Operations Phase - Step 7.

Removal/Dumping

At certain depths in heavy snowfalls, it will be necessary to not only plow snow but also to remove it from the roadways to ensure that all travel and curb lanes are available to restore normal traffic flow. Although this type of operation is rare for our metropolitan area, agencies must be prepared for this possibility. The local transportation system and the commuting public and commerce, all of which depends on the road system, will remain in a state of chaos if curb lanes and bus stops are out of service because of snow piling.

Removal and dumping operations require different types of equipment than that routinely used by snow response agencies and therefore, identifying suppliers of such equipment must be considered in advance. Contractors in the private sector can assist with dump trucks and front-end loaders at this stage of operations.

Federal environmental regulations prohibit dumping snow in waterways such as rivers and streams without a permit from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Until such time as EPA permits pre-approval of designated water dumping sites, agencies must either avoid the waterways and identify other dumping sites on land, or at the time of a large storm, seek approval from EPA for waterway dumping sites. The lack of vacant and accessible land in urban and dense suburban areas and the proximity of certain waterways to the roads and highways that are being cleared of snow make the value of choosing waterways clear. When the need for EPA to approve water-dumping sites is anticipated, the request(s) can be initially passed to EPA during the regional teleconference call for an early decision.

Each agency should identify land dumping sites in their local snow plan. Government-owned parks and vacant lots may be ideal dumping sites because the ground filters out debris picked up with the snow. Besides trash, agencies need to be mindful of the chemical residue that remains after salting and applying calcium chloride on roadways and the effect that these chemicals can have on dumping sites.

Removal and dumping operations, unless managed properly, can cause extensive damage to street and road infrastructure by loosening pavement, breaking curbs, and damaging fireplugs, traffic control boxes, storm drains, and manhole covers. Such obstacles should be identified and marked. Contractors should be briefed and trained on avoiding damage to these items. It is extremely important to free storm drains of accumulating snow and ice so that melting runoff can enter the drain and avoid refreezing on the roads.

Operations Phase - Step 8.

Early Release

See [Annex B](#) for detailed information on suggested procedures for dismissing of employees early based on intensifying snow conditions.

D. Phase 4 - RECOVERY PHASE

As the storm abates, and as major arteries and residential streets are cleared, agencies can move to the Recovery Phase of the plan. Recovery consists of phasing-down operations by: terminating contractor operations; returning employees to regular work schedules; pushing back or removing any piles of snow still hindering the normal flow of traffic, such as on the shoulders of the road; cleaning and servicing vehicles and equipment; replenishing or shifting snow-related supplies; and preparing needed financial reports and any justification for reimbursement.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

1. Provide facility and staff support for plan development and maintenance.
2. Make annual revisions to keep the plan current and relevant.

3. Facilitate regional teleconference calls and maintain participant listings.
4. Send RICCS Alerts.

B. District of Columbia Homeland Security & Emergency Management Agency

1. Facilitate regional teleconference calls and/or send RICCS Alerts in the absence of COG staff.
2. Operate the HSEMA teleconference system for regional calls when requested.
3. Make available the National Alert Warning System (NAWAS) and its local circuit, the Washington Area Warning System (WAWAS), for snow emergency purposes.

C. Baltimore/Washington Forecast Office of the National Weather Service

1. Issue Winter Weather Statements over NAWAS/WAWAS.
2. Provide updated weather information for use in the plan and for the teleconference calls.
3. Notify COG of a forecast of 1 INCH OR MORE OF SNOW, or any accumulation of ice.

D. Local, State, and Federal Agencies

1. Prepare local plans for snow and ice removal that are specific to the jurisdiction and follow the tenets of this plan.
2. Implement those portions of this plan that are applicable within the jurisdiction's area of responsibility.
3. Provide an accurate assessment during conference calls of the agency's ability to respond to snow emergencies.

ANNEXES

ANNEX A

COMMUNICATIONS

This Annex addresses the communications systems and process that will be used in this regional snow plan. The essence of this regional snow plan is sharing information regarding the snow emergency, and mutually resolving problems arising from such an event.

Teleconference Systems

Both COG and HSEMA have teleconference systems. Specific services may vary each season. Specific instructions to participate on a scheduled conference call will be provided via a wireless alert over email, pager, cell phone, PDA, or computer generated voice messages. Additional information is provided in [Appendix A-2 \(Page 20\)](#). In an effort to make calls more efficient, only those persons on the Primary Call List (or their designees) will be invited to join in on the conference calls.

Based on the lessons learned during the 2009-10 winter season, it is recommended that the Chief Administrative Officers from each jurisdiction examine carefully the list of authorized representatives for the conference call to ensure that the designated participant has the proper authority to make decisions prior to, or while on the call and to eliminate over-representation from a jurisdiction. Such duplication of effort increases associated costs. Conference call costs are based on the number of participants and the length of time each spends on the call. Calls resulting from natural disasters cannot be billed to COG Homeland Security codes and are not recoverable by COG under the Stafford Act.

The **National Alert Warning System (NAWAS)** and its local communications circuit, the **Washington Area Warning System (WAWAS)** - are federal emergency communications systems (wire line/phone system) available to local governments for weather and technology related disaster communications. For purposes of this plan, WAWAS is the primary method by which the Washington Forecast Office of the National Weather Service communicates changes in the weather. This landline telephone system is the most rapid means of communicating about a threatening or actual emergency to government agencies across the region. The District of Columbia Office of Emergency Preparedness is a control point on the national system and operates the local circuit, which includes over 50 local, state, and federal government agencies. This circuit is used primarily for transmitting weather information but can be used for teleconferencing. Participants are limited to those fixed sites/drops that are direct-wired into the system.

Emergency Alert System (EAS) [formerly Emergency Broadcast System (EBS)] – was designed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in cooperation with the National Weather Service (NWS) and FEMA.

The EAS uses state-of-the-art digital technology to distribute emergency messages.

The system provides states and local officials with a method to quickly send out important local emergency information targeted at a specific area as defined by the Federal Information Processing System (FIPS) codes.

Also, the EAS digital signal is the same signal that the NWS uses to activate the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Weather Radio (NWR) receivers.

This allows NWR signals to be decoded by EAS receivers located at broadcast stations, cable systems, homes and other facilities.

Broadcasters and cable operators can then send NWS weather warning messages almost immediately to their audiences.

The ultimate goal of EAS is to disseminate EAS information as quickly as possible to people who need it.

COMMUNICATIONS PROCESS

Whereas local snow plans deal in great detail with snow clearing operations, this regional plan deals mainly with setting overall guidelines for coordination and exchanging information in winter storm emergencies that affect the metropolitan Washington area. The best decisions are made when good information is available. Good information should flow from the procedures established in this plan, i.e. the teleconference calls, NAWAS/WAWAS and RICCS announcements, and peer-to-peer contacts. It is critical that the officials with key information be in contact with each other during the emergency to discuss a course of action to mitigate the effects.

The **Key Personnel Listing** ([Appendix A-3](#) – Page 23) in the plan provides snow response agency managers with a list of counterparts in other agencies to coordinate snow-clearing operations at jurisdictional boundaries, discuss mutual aid, or seek technical assistance. Communications at this level involve operational matters, not policy issues.

National Weather Service - An accurate weather forecast is essential to the success of any snow clearing operation. With enough warning, most agencies can deploy equipment and schedule personnel to stay ahead of the storm. The NWS will provide information in accordance with the template (See [Appendix A-2](#) – Page 20) that was drafted with input from the region. The weather briefings will also provide the opportunity for participants to ask educated questions of the briefing host; however, **questions specific to one's jurisdiction should be kept to a minimum, keeping in mind that most questions will be answered by the NWS utilizing the COG Template. Being on time for the call and listening attentively will help limit the questions.**

Schools / Day Care - After weather, the next useful piece of information is **whether schools are open or closed**. Working parents cannot begin their workday without making necessary school or day care arrangements. The school systems' decisions are very helpful in the sequence of decisions for government and private sector openings, delayed openings or closings. Personnel policies of government and private sector employers on snow days may factor in school and day care considerations.

ANNEX B

EARLY DISMISSAL DECISION

Following a decision to open local, state, and federal government offices and private sector workplaces, it may be necessary to dismiss employees early based on intensifying snow conditions. If an early release is required, all local, state and federal government agencies are encouraged to consider the recommendations outlined in this Annex, and governments should encourage major private employers in the region to do so as well. Each government, local, state or federal, retains full independence in dismissing its employees early if conditions warrant, but agrees to consult in advance with other participating jurisdictions according to the procedure outlined in this Annex.

An advisory, watch or warning from the Washington Forecast Office of the National Weather Service or any commercial weather service that snow conditions are intensifying, coupled with any local jurisdiction/agency requesting a conference call for the purpose of discussing early dismissal, will trigger a regional teleconference call as described in [Annex A](#) – Page 14.

Key Factors: The following key factors should be considered in reaching a decision for early dismissal:

1. **Safety** - Paramount consideration is safety of the commuting public.
2. **Intensity and Duration** - Intensity and duration of the storm.
3. **Highway/Street Status** - Highway/street clearing status.
4. **Impact** - Impact of release on snow clearing effort.
5. **Metro Status** - Status of METRO and local transit systems' rail and bus operators.
6. **Timing** - Timing of dismissal.

If the decision is reached to dismiss early, then the following decisions and actions are strongly recommended:

1. Set decision time. Implement dismissal as soon as practical after emergency is recognized.
2. Set first increment of release at decision time plus one hour.
3. Agency participants on the teleconference call should immediately notify the appropriate offices in: DC/DPW Traffic Services, VDOT, MDSHA, Arlington County, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Fairfax County and the City of Alexandria to prepare traffic signals and devices for an unscheduled outbound rush before the first increment is released.
4. WMATA representative, in conjunction with other Mass Transit representatives on the conference call, should take necessary actions to prepare rail and bus operations for an unscheduled outbound rush before the first increment is released. WMATA will coordinate with those agencies not participating in the Snow Call during a RICCS RESF 1-Level B conference call.

5. Governments at all levels should immediately inform their employees that an early dismissal has been implemented through established channels of communications, e.g. fax, voicemail and electronic mail.
6. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management should inform the news media of any federal government early dismissal.

The recommendations outlined in this Annex are based on these important considerations:

Each jurisdiction/agency has their own plans for Early Dismissals. Some close their offices at a specific time, but most instruct employees to leave a specific number of hours prior to their regular dismissal time. The federal government and many local governments and private employers have, in recent years, adopted a flexible working schedule, which allows daytime employees to report as early as 6:00 AM or as late as 9:30 AM. The staggered arrival and departure times have worked well to reduce the traffic gridlock occurring during peak travel hours. Dismissing employees a given number of hours early will replicate this already established staggered departure procedure, just at an earlier than normal time during snow emergencies. Furthermore, the federal government and many local governments and private employees have adopted telecommuting/teleworking policies. If there is a threat of weather disrupting the work day, employees could be allowed and encouraged to Telework.

APPENDICES

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS SNOW CONFERENCE CALL CHECKLIST & PROCEDURES

Appendix A-1

Conference Calls

(Qv [Conference Call Notifications](#), Page 7)

Initiation and Alerting

1. The National Weather Service (NWS) notifies COG of an expectation anywhere in the NCR of: **1 INCH OF SNOW (for rush hour impact inside the beltway) or 2 INCHES OF SNOW for outside Capital Beltway during Rush Hour and for all areas during Non-Rush Hour).**
2. The Council of Governments (COG) staff will schedule conference calls using Premier Technologies ReadyConference. This system does not require reservations.

Participants will be alerted about scheduled conference calls via their personal wireless systems such as their cell phone, PDA, pager and e-mail. These alerts are generated through the Regional Incident Communication Coordination System (RICCS).

- **The alert message will include the number, date, time and pass code for the conference call.**
- **At the appointed time, dial in to the (800) number or WebEx number provided in your alert message.**
- **Enter the assigned pass code.**
- **You will be placed into the full conference with other participants.**
- **Press *0 for operator help.**

Ready Conference

The current COG teleconference system is **ReadyConference™**.
The current Snow Call Passcode will be assigned at the time of the RICCS alert.
Call-in numbers may vary.

HSEMA will provide a RICCS alert and a backup teleconference capability in the event that COG staff is unable to initiate an alert or the ReadyConference System is down.

Conference Call Etiquette

- Do not use a speakerphone. It creates background noise
- If possible, avoid mobile phones. Wireless connections can create distracting static.
- Out of courtesy to others, please remember to MUTE YOUR PHONE any time you are not speaking **(*6)**

- Please remember to ***BE PROMPT***. If you get on the call late, do not expect the NWS or anyone else to reiterate their briefings. Please be respectful of everyone's time. Also, please hold your questions until the end; please do not interrupt.

Call Structure

This format shall be followed for every call:

- **Roll Call** - Limited roll call taken by COG.
- **Briefing** - NWS provides weather briefing
- **DDOT, MDOT, VDOT** - Receive information from District DOT, Maryland DOT, and Virginia DOT.
- **Roadways** - Receive information from local jurisdictions on roadway conditions.
- **Interstate Travel** - Ask whether the MSP/VSP have anything to report regarding interstate travel.
- **Metro** - Receive information from Metro.
- **Rail** - Receive information from Amtrak, MARC, and VRE.
- **Bus** - Receive information from Bus.
- **Utilities** - Ask whether the utilities have anything significant to report.
- **Schools Open/Close Decisions** - Ask if any schools have made an open/close decision.
- **Jurisdictional Open/Close Decisions** - Ask if any local governments have made an open/close decision.
- **Further discussion** – Hold further discussion if needed.
- **Additional Call** - Make the determination as to whether there will be an additional call, either later in the day or the next morning. COG will make the subsequent notifications via RICCS. COG will ask OPM for any thoughts or concerns before concluding the call.
- **CALL ENDS** - Thank you for your participation. This ends the conference call.

Decision Making

After a 3:00 AM call, COG's Director of Public Safety & Health will contact OPM Deputy Associate Director regarding OPM status, and advise the Public Safety Planner/RICCS Coordinator to send a RICCS page, notifying both Snow Core and RESF-5 Core Groups accordingly.

Appendix A-2

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

(Qv [NWS](#), Page 15)

CONFERENCE CALL BRIEFING - TEMPLATE

The Conference Call Brief from the National Weather Service will include the following:

- Watch, Warning or Advisory
- Onset Time of Precipitation across the region
- Road/surface temperatures at onset of precipitation and what they are expected to do.
- Exit Time of Steady Precipitation.
- Amount Expected.
- Precipitation Will Fall As? Any Changeovers? When? (Important to define phase lines between snow, rain, and mixed areas).
- Temperatures During (and up to 1 day after) Event.
- Winds During (and up to 1 day after) Event.
- Main Impacts Expected.
- Degree of confidence in the forecast.
- When the forecast will be updated again.

TEMPLATE FOR REGIONAL PARTNER INPUT

The following templates shall be used by our regional partners to provide information during the call:

1. RECEIVE the following information from District DOT, Maryland DOT, and Virginia DOT.

Roadway	√		√		√		√	
Performance vs. Expectation		On track/ Maintaining		Will complete by evening rush hour		Will complete by next morning rush hour		Will take more than 2 rush hour cycles to complete
Roadway Clearance		Open		Major roads open; minor roads moderately impacted		Major roads impacted; widespread problems on smaller roads		Major road lane closures; minor roads widely impassable
Interstate and Principle Arterial Conditions		100% Open		More than 90% lanes open		50% to 90% lanes open		Less than 50% open
Minor Arterial Conditions		100% Passable		More than 50% open		Less than 50% open		Mostly Impassable
Residential Street Conditions		100% Passable		More than 50% open		Less than 50% open		Mostly Impassable
Projected clearance time		4 hours or less		4 to 8 hours		8 to 18 hours		18 hours or more

2. Receive the same roadway information from the local jurisdictions.
3. Ask whether the MSP/VSP have anything to report regarding interstate travel.
4. Receive the following information from Metro:

Metro	√		√		√		√	
Passenger Service		Normal to minor delays		Noticeable delays		Underground service only		None (3 hr notification)
Level of Service		Normal to minor delays		6 to 10 min. increased headways		Headways at 20-30 minutes		None
Parking Lot Conditions		Normal operations		More than 90% availability		50% to 90% availability		Less than 50%
Closures		None		Delays but no closures		No service above ground		No Service

Metro	√		√		√		√	

5. Receive the following information from Amtrak, MARC, and VRE:

Amtrak, MARC, & VRE	√		√		√		√	
Passenger Service		Normal		Travel time increased 50%		Travel time increased 100%		Travel time increased 200%
Level of Service		Normal		More than 90%		50% to 90% of normal		Less than 50%
Parking Lot Conditions		Normal operations		More than 90% availability		50% to 90% availability		Less than 50%
Closures		None		Delays but no closures		Sporadic closures		Widespread closures

6. Receive the following information from Bus (Please note there may be several bus agencies online):

Bus	√		√		√		√	
Passenger Service		Normal		Significant delays, limited service		Severely limited service		No service
Level of Service		Normal to minor delays		Restricted to major roadways		Main bus service only		No service

7. Ask whether the utilities have anything significant to report.
8. Ask if any schools have made an open/close decision.
9. Ask if any local governments have made an open/close decision.

Appendix A-3

KEY PERSONNEL LISTING FOR SNOW OPERATIONS ([Ov. Page 15](#))

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>CONTACT</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
<u>FEDERAL AGENCIES</u>		
MWAA (Airports)	National – Snow Desk/Operations	(703) 417-8320/8050
	Dulles – Operations	(703) 572-2730
National Park Service (NPS)	James Warfield	(202) 619-7058
	Jeff Young	(202) 619-6386
	US Park Police Communication Center	(202) 610-7500
National Weather Service (NWS)	Duty Forecaster	(703) 996-2201
U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM)	OPM Situation Room	(202) 418-0111
<u>COUNTIES / CITIES</u>		
<i>(Including dual or multiple county collaborations – where applicable)</i>		
Alexandria	Yon Lambert, Deputy Director Operations	(571) 238-1005 (Cell)
	Jeffrey Duval, Division Chief	(703) 746-4103 (Office) (703) 869-6968 (Cell)
Anne Arundel/Calvert/ Charles/St. Mary’s Counties <i>(MULTIPLE COUNTIES)</i>	Lee Starkloff, District 5 Engineer	(410) 841-1010
	Joseph Geckle, ADE-Maintenance District-5	(410) 841-1013
	Ronald Tasker, RME-Annapolis Shop	(410) 841-1009
	Bruce Perry, RME-Glen Burnie Shop	(410) 766-3770
	Tommy Swann, RME-Prince Frederick Shop	(410) 535-1748 (301) 934-8031
	Richard McIntyre, RME-La Plata Shop	(301) 475-8035
	Stewart W. Dement, RME- Leonardtown Shop	

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>CONTACT</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
Bowie	Kevin Kennedy Street Maintenance Supervisor	(301) 809-2331 (240) 508-5308 (Cell)
Charles County	Bill Shreve	(301) 609-5601 (Office) (240) 419-0651 (Cell)
	Stephen Staples	(301) 932-3455 (301) 399-8556 (Cell)
College Park	Robert T. (Bob) Stumpff Director of Public Works	(240) 487-3590 (Office) (240) 375-4778 (Cell)
Fairfax City	Willis Shafer <i>24 Hour (only active during snow event)</i>	(703) 385-7983 (703) 385-2629
Fairfax County	Bill Hicks	(703) 877-2800 (Office)
	OEM Duty Officer	(571) 439-4901
Frederick County	Bill Routzahn Superintendent of Highway Operations	(301) 600-1564
Frederick/Carroll Counties <i>(BOTH COUNTIES)</i>	Mark Crampton, District 7 Engineer	(301) 624-8101
	Sue Palmer, ADE-Maintenance District 7	(301) 624-8106
	David W. Smith, RME-Westminster Shop	(410) 848-6565
	Kenneth Karlheim, RME-Frederick Shop	(301) 624-8251 (410) 531-5533
	James H. Jones, RME-Dayton Shop	
Gaithersburg	Michael D. Johnson, Director of Public Works	(301) 258-6370 (Office) (240) 428-9588 (Cell)
	Mark Scafide, Public Works Operations Division Chief	(301) 258-6370 (Office) (240) 793-5721 (Cell)
Greenbelt	Kenny Hall Director of Public Works	(240) 508-7721 (Cell)
	Jim Sterling Assistant Director of Public Works	(240) 508-6620 (Cell)

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>CONTACT</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
Manassas	Michael Moon Director – Public Works/Utilities	(703) 257-8226
	Bruce Gourdarzi, Deputy Director Public Works	(703) 257-8251
	VACANT , Street Superintendent	(703) 257-8347
Manassas Park	Jay Johnson Director of Public Works	(703) 335-8840 (O) (703) 928-3021 (C)
	Calvin O’Dell Assistant Director of Public Works	(703) 335-0019 (O) (571) 221-4060 (C)
Montgomery Co.	Keith Compton, Chief, Highway Services	(240) 777-7607 (240) 876-7894
	Richard Dorsey, Chief, Field Operations	(240) 777-7600
	Randy Paugh, Director, Storm Operations Center	(240) 777-7608 (240) 821-7242
Prince George’s County	Gwen Clerkley, Associate Director, Office of Highway Maintenance	(240) 508-9728
	Vernon Stinnett, Chief, Storm Drain Maintenance Division	(301) 602-1292
	Leslie Wohlers, Associate Director, Administrative Services	(240) 508-1866
Rockville	Craig Simoneau, Director of Public Works	(240) 314-8502 (O) (301) 876-9003 (C)
	Steve Sokol, Operations & Maintenance Superintendent	(240) 314-8576 (O) (240) 515-3450 (C)
Takoma Park	Daryl Braithwaite Director of Public Works	301-891-7615 (O) 301-674-8229 (C)

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>CONTACT</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
<u>STATE AGENCIES</u> <i>(Including the District of Columbia)</i>		
<u>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</u>		
District of Columbia	Snow Center	(202) 671-1377
	Christopher Shorter, DPW Director	(202) 671-2260 202-412-3460 (C)
	Robert Marsili Jr., DPW Snow Coordinator	(202) 671-2832
<u>MARYLAND</u>		
Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)	Gary Zamerski, Branch Manager	(410) 517-3646 (O)
Maryland Joint Operations Center (MJOC)	Gary Zamerski, Manager	(410) 517-3600
Maryland State Highway Administration / District – 3	Brian Young, District-3 Engineer <i>(Both Montgomery and Prince George's Counties)</i>	(301) 513-7311
	Thomas Fountain, ADE-Maintenance District-3 <i>(Both Montgomery and Prince George's Counties)</i>	(301) 513-7304
	Ramesh Patel, RME-Fairland Shop (Montgomery County Only)	(301) 572-5166
	Bret Habzimichalis, RME-Laurel Shop (Prince George's County Only!)	(301) 776-7619
	Greg Edwards, RME-Gaithersburg Shop / Montgomery County	(301) 948-2477
	Marcus Brown, RME-Marlboro Shop / Prince George's County	(301) 952-0555
	24-Hour Maryland Statewide Emergency Operations Center	(410) 582-5650 (410) 582-5630

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>CONTACT</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
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VIRGINIA

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)	Communications Service Center	(800) 367-7623
	Branco Vlacich District Maintenance Administrator	(703) 259-2429
	Andrew Glenn Infrastructure Manager	(703) 259-1946
	Hari Sripathi, Operations Director	(703) 259-2223
	VDOT Transportation Operations Center	(703) 877-3450
Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC) – 24 Hour Watch Center	Michael Nelson, Director Operations	(804) 674-2400 (800) 468-8892

TRANSPORTATION AGENCIES

Fairfax County Connector	Randall Keays (Fairfax County Connector)	(703) 877-5646 (O) (571) 358-5657 (C)
	Jeff Cox (Fairfax County Connector)	(703) 877-5618 (O) (571) 425-8896 (C)
AMTRAK	Steve Fruchtman	202-604-7094 (C) 202-906-2551 (O)
Ride On	Central Dispatch for Montgomery County Snow Center	(240) 777-7433
VRE - (Virginia Rail Express)	Chris Henry	(571) 221-9371
WMATA (METRO)	Robert Troup Deputy General Manager for Operations	(202) 603-3964
	Jack Requa, Assistant General Manager for Bus	(202) 369-3843 (C)
	Ron Bodmer Director, Office of Emergency Mgmt.	(202) 281-8181

UNIT

CONTACT

PHONE

Operations Control (24 Hours)

(202) 962-1652 / 1530

Note: Prince William, Loudoun and Fairfax Counties clear snow only at their government centers – VDOT clears all other roads in these counties that are part of the Commonwealth of Virginia Highway System.

APPENDIX B:

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION
Snow Emergency Outreach Plans

Appendix B-1

- In each NCR jurisdiction, protocols should be in place so that the people on the Snow Emergency Conference Call will notify the jurisdiction’s PIO/public affairs directors to pass on relevant information on weather conditions and governmental status. With that information, the PIOs will prepare and make announcements to the public and the media regarding their individual government’s decision making and operating status.
- The private sector usually follows the lead of either the federal government or the local government in which they are located. Each agency and jurisdiction should use numerous venues and tools to get the word out about operating status so that the private sector can easily access that information and plan accordingly.

Data Parameters For Public Messaging

Weather Conditions

Normal/Fair/Severe/Critical
24-Hour Forecast

School Status

Open/Delays/Early Dismissal/ Closed

Government Status

Federal/State/Local
Open/Closed
Personnel Status
Emergency Personnel
 Unscheduled Leave
 Delayed Arrival
 Early Dismissal
 Staged Release

Transit Status

Metro/MARC/VRE/Amtrak
Station Closings
Transit Delays
Parking Lot Availability/Capacity

Road Conditions

Interstate Highways
Major Arterial Roadways
Bridges
Residential Streets
Street Parking

Proposed Regional Terminology and Definitions

OPEN under XX HOUR(S) DELAYED ARRIVAL and employees have the OPTION FOR UNSCHEDULED LEAVE OR UNSCHEDULED TELEWORK.

Normal operating procedures are in effect. Employees account for their hours of work by WATS: Working at a worksite (typically the office) in the DC area or teleworking

Telework - *Telework-ready employees who are regularly scheduled to perform telework or who notify their supervisor of their intention to perform unscheduled telework must be prepared to telework for the entire workday, or take unscheduled leave, or a combination of both for the entire workday.*

Delayed Arrival - *Non-emergency employees should plan their commute so the arrival for work is no more than XX hour(s) later than the employees' normal arrival time. For example, if OPM announces a 2-hour delayed arrival policy, employees who normally would arrive at 8:00 a.m. should arrive for work no later than 10:00 a.m. arrival time.*

Early Departure Time - *Non-emergency employees will be dismissed from their office early relative to their scheduled departure times and will be granted excused absence (administrative leave) for the number of hours remaining in their workday beyond their early departure time. For example, if a 3-hour **staggered early departure** is announced, employees who work 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. would be expected to depart at 2:00 p.m. (i.e., the employees' **staggered departure time**).*

Immediate Departure - *Non-emergency employees should depart immediately from their offices. All non-emergency employees will be granted excused absence (administrative leave) for the number of hours remaining in their workday. For example, if OPM announces an immediate departure at 12:00 p.m., all non-emergency employees will be granted excused absence (administrative leave) for the number of hours remaining in their scheduled workday unless covered by one of the exceptions listed below.*

Closed to Public - *Non-emergency employees will be granted excused absence for the number of hours they were scheduled to work unless covered by one of the exceptions listed below.*

Shelter-in-place (SIP) - *Shelter-in-place (SIP) procedures are conducted when employees (and visitors) must remain in the office or take immediate shelter in a readily accessible interior location to protect themselves. An SIP may be needed for a variety of reasons, which could include severe weather (e.g., tornadoes) or danger from exposure to outside contaminants in the event of a release into the atmosphere of hazardous materials such as radiological, biological, or chemical contaminants. A shelter-in-place announcement could be used in conjunction with other OPM operations status announcements for the Washington, DC area.*

Appendix B-3

OPM Announcements on the Status of Federal Government Operations in the Washington, DC Area

STATUS OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS WASHINGTON, DC AREA	
The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) provides the following announcements to the media when a disruption occurs before or during the workday in the Washington, DC area.	
Announcement	What Announcement Means
OPEN	<p>“Federal agencies in the Washington, DC area are OPEN.”</p> <p>Employees are expected to report to their worksites or begin telework on time. Normal operating procedures are in effect.</p> <p>Employees account for their hours of work by WATS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working at a worksite in the DC area,• Alternative work schedules (AWS) day off,• Teleworking, or• Scheduled leave or other paid time off.

OPEN WITH OPTION FOR UNSCHEDULED LEAVE OR UNSCHEDULED TELEWORK

“Federal agencies in the Washington, DC area are **OPEN** and employees have the **OPTION** for **UNSCHEDULED LEAVE OR UNSCHEDULED TELEWORK.**”

Non-Emergency Employees must notify their supervisor of their intent to use unscheduled leave or unscheduled telework (if telework-ready). In accordance with their agency’s policies and procedures, subject to any applicable collective bargaining requirements (as consistent with law), non-emergency employees have the option to use:

- (1) earned annual leave, compensatory time off, credit hours, or sick leave, as appropriate;
- (2) leave without pay;
- (3) their alternative work schedule (AWS) day off or rearrange their work hours under flexible work schedules; or
- (4) unscheduled telework (if telework-ready).

Telework-Ready Employees who are regularly scheduled to perform telework or who notify their supervisor of their intention to perform unscheduled telework must be prepared to telework for the entire workday, or take unscheduled leave, or a combination of both, for the entire workday in accordance with their agency’s policies and procedures, subject to any applicable collective bargaining requirements (as consistent with law).

Emergency Employees are expected to report to their worksites on time unless otherwise directed by their agencies.

**OPEN – XX HOUR(S)
DELAYED ARRIVAL – WITH
OPTION FOR UNSCHEDULED
LEAVE OR UNSCHEDULED
TELEWORK**

“Federal agencies in the Washington, DC area are **OPEN** under **XX HOUR(S) DELAYED ARRIVAL** and employees have the **OPTION FOR UNSCHEDULED LEAVE OR UNSCHEDULED TELEWORK**. Employees should plan to arrive for work no more than XX hour(s) later than they would be expected to arrive. ”

Non-Emergency Employees who report to the office will be granted excused absence (administrative leave) for up to XX hour(s) past their expected arrival time. In accordance with their agency’s policies and procedures, subject to any applicable collective bargaining requirements (as consistent with law), non-emergency employees may notify their supervisor of their intent to use:

- (1) earned annual leave, compensatory time off, credit hours, or sick leave, as appropriate;
- (2) leave without pay;
- (3) their alternative work schedule (AWS) day off or rearrange their work hours under flexible work schedules; or
- (4) unscheduled telework (if telework-ready).
(Employees who request unscheduled leave should be charged leave for the entire workday.)

Telework-Ready Employees who are regularly scheduled to perform telework or who notify their supervisor of their intention to perform unscheduled telework must be prepared to telework for the entire workday, or take unscheduled leave, or a combination of both, for the entire workday in accordance with their agency’s policies and procedures, subject to any applicable collective bargaining requirements (as consistent with law).

Pre-approved Leave. Employees on pre-approved leave for the entire workday or employees who requested unscheduled leave for the entire workday should be charged leave for the entire day.

Emergency Employees are expected to report to their worksites on time unless otherwise directed by their agencies.

OPEN – DELAYED ARRIVAL – EMPLOYEES MUST REPORT TO THEIR OFFICE NO LATER THAN XX:XX – WITH OPTION FOR UNSCHEDULED LEAVE OR UNSCHEDULED TELEWORK

“Federal agencies in the Washington, DC area are **OPEN** under a **DELAYED ARRIVAL** where employees in the Washington, DC, area must **REPORT TO THEIR OFFICE NO LATER THAN XX:XX** and have the **OPTION FOR UNSCHEDULED LEAVE OR UNSCHEDULED TELEWORK.**”

Non-Emergency Employees who report to the office will be granted excused absence (administrative leave) up until the announced reporting time. In accordance with their agency’s policies and procedures, subject to any applicable collective bargaining requirements (as consistent with law), non-emergency employees may notify their supervisor of their intent to use:

- (1) earned annual leave, compensatory time off, credit hours, or sick leave, as appropriate;
- (2) leave without pay;
- (3) their alternative work schedule (AWS) day off or rearrange their work hours under flexible work schedules; or
- (4) unscheduled telework (if telework-ready). (Employees who request unscheduled leave should be charged leave for the entire workday.)

Telework-Ready Employees who are regularly scheduled to perform telework or who notify their supervisor of their intention to perform unscheduled telework must be prepared to telework for the entire workday, or take unscheduled leave, or a combination of both, for the entire workday in accordance with their agency’s policies and procedures, subject to any applicable collective bargaining requirements (as consistent with law).

Pre-approved Leave Employees on pre-approved leave for the entire workday should be charged leave for the entire workday.

Emergency Employees are expected to report to their worksite on time unless otherwise directed by their agencies.

**OPEN - XX HOUR(S)
STAGGERED EARLY
DEPARTURE**

“Federal agencies in the Washington, DC area are **OPEN**. Employees should depart **XX HOUR(S)** earlier than their normal departure times and may request **UNSCHEDULED LEAVE** to depart prior to their staggered departure times.”

Non-emergency Employees:

Excused Absence. Non-emergency employees will be dismissed from their offices **XX hour(s)** early relative to their normal departure times and will be granted excused absence (administrative leave) for the number of hours remaining in their workday.

Departure Prior to Early Dismissal Time. Non-emergency employees who depart prior to their staggered early departure times may request to use unscheduled leave. Such employees will be charged leave for the remainder of their workday and will not be granted excused absence.

Telework-Ready Employees performing telework must continue to telework or take unscheduled leave, or a combination of both for the entire workday or the remainder of the workday, as applicable, in accordance with their agency’s policies and procedures, subject to any applicable collective bargaining requirements (as consistent with law).

Pre-approved leave. An employee on pre-approved leave for the entire workday or an employee who has requested unscheduled leave before an early departure policy is announced should continue to be charged leave for the remainder of the workday.

Emergency Employees are expected to remain at their worksite unless otherwise directed by their agencies.

**OPEN - XX HOUR(S)
STAGGERED EARLY
DEPARTURE – ALL
EMPLOYEES MUST DEPART
NO LATER THAN XX: XX AT
WHICH TIME FEDERAL
OFFICES ARE CLOSED**

“Federal agencies in the Washington, DC area are **OPEN**. Employees should depart **XX HOUR(S)** earlier than their normal departure times and may request **UNSCHEDULED LEAVE** to depart prior to their staggered departure times. All employees **MUST DEPART** at no later than **XX: XX** at which time **FEDERAL OFFICES** in the Washington, DC area are **CLOSED**.”

Non-emergency Employees:

Excused Absence. Non-emergency employees will be dismissed from their offices early relative to their normal departure time or at the final departure time and will be granted excused absence (administrative leave) for the number of hours remaining in their workday beyond their early departure time or their final departure time.

Departure Prior to Early Departure Time. Non-emergency employees who depart prior to their staggered early departure time or final departure time may request to use unscheduled leave. Such employees will be charged leave for the remainder of their workday and will not be granted excused absence.

Pre-approved leave. Employees on pre-approved leave for the entire workday or employees who have requested unscheduled leave before an early departure policy is announced should continue to be charged annual or sick leave for the entire day or remainder of the workday, as applicable.

Telework-Ready Employees performing telework must continue to telework or take unscheduled leave, or a combination of both for the entire workday in accordance with their agency’s policies and procedures, subject to any applicable collective bargaining requirements (as consistent with law).

Emergency Employees are expected to remain at their worksite unless otherwise directed by their agencies.

**IMMEDIATE DEPARTURE –
FEDERAL OFFICES ARE
CLOSED**

“IMMEDIATE DEPARTURE. Employees should depart **IMMEDIATELY. FEDERAL OFFICES** in the Washington, DC area are **CLOSED.**”

Non-emergency employees should depart immediately from the office. All non-emergency employees will be granted excused absence (administrative leave) for the number of hours remaining in their workday unless they are:

- on official travel outside of the Washington, DC area,
- on leave without pay, or
- on an alternative work schedule (AWS) day off.

Telework-Ready Employees performing telework must continue to telework for the entire workday or take unscheduled leave for the remainder of the workday, as applicable in accordance with their agency’s policies and procedures, subject to any applicable collective bargaining requirements (as consistent with law).

Emergency Employees are expected to remain at their worksite unless otherwise directed by their agencies.

FEDERAL OFFICES ARE CLOSED – EMERGENCY AND TELEWORK-READY EMPLOYEES MUST FOLLOW THEIR AGENCY’S POLICIES

“**FEDERAL OFFICES** in the Washington, DC area are **CLOSED**. Emergency and telework-ready employees required to work must follow their agency’s policies, including written telework agreements.”

Non-emergency employees will be granted excused absence (administrative leave) for the number of hours they were scheduled to work unless they are:

- required to telework,
- on official travel outside of the Washington, DC area,
- on pre-approved leave (including leave without pay), or
- on an alternative work schedule (AWS) day off.

Telework-Ready Employees who are scheduled to perform telework on the effective day of the announcement or who are required to perform telework on a day when Federal offices are closed must telework the entire workday or request leave, or a combination of both, in accordance with their agency’s policies and procedures, subject to any applicable collective bargaining requirements.

Emergency Employees are expected to report to their worksite unless otherwise directed by their agencies.

<p>SHELTER-IN-PLACE</p>	<p>“FEDERAL OFFICES in the Washington, DC area are under SHELTER-IN-PLACE procedures and are CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC.”</p> <p><i>Employees Located at Agency Worksite.</i> All employees should follow their agency’s emergency procedures for shelter-in-place. Employees should remain in their designated safe area until they are notified by agency officials that they may return to the office or leave the worksite.</p> <p><i>Telework-Ready Employees</i> performing telework are expected to continue working during the shelter-in-place, unless affected by the emergency or otherwise notified by their agencies.</p>
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***Note:** As a general principle, OPM may issue a new or hybrid operating status announcement at any time, depending on the particulars of an emergency, for the safety of employees and continuity of Government operations. OPM will always attempt to use the published operating status announcements.*

Appendix B-4

REGIONAL RESOURCES

National Weather Service

The National Weather Service site for local snow & ice information and real-time updates in the NCR is:

<http://www.weather.gov/lwx/winter>

Office of Personnel Management

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Dismissal and Closure Procedures link for the Washington, DC Area (*effective November 2012*) is as follows:

<http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/dismissal.pdf>

Capital Alert

When an emergency strikes, will you know what to do, where to go or where to get more information? You can if you sign up for free emergency alerts from the local governments in the Washington, DC region.

To sign up for free emergency alerts from the local governments in the Washington, DC region, and to get instant access to weather and government operating status information, GO TO:

www.capitalert.gov.

Virtual Joint Information Center (VJIC)

NEWS FEEDS FROM NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION JURISDICTIONS

National Capital Region Unveils New Web Portal and Winter Preparedness Campaign. The jurisdictions of the National Capital Region have a new communications tool to communicate emergency information to residents of the NCR – it's a Web portal, www.CapitalRegionUpdates.gov. Through this online resource, residents can stay connected to local jurisdictional news (through a combined RSS feed of local news releases), localized weather from the national Weather Service, traffic and transit alerts, tips on how to prepare for emergencies and much more. Stay Off The Roads - Not Out in the Weather: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztIv33SJcnw> –

Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination Program (MATOC)

Following the experiences of the 9/11 attacks and other major incidents, the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) championed creation of the Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) Program, partnering with the region's major transportation agencies – the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia Departments of Transportation, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). Its primary purpose is to strengthen multiagency coordination among transportation response agencies during incidents, improve the quality and timeliness of the information available through current sources, and to help ensure transportation systems condition information is provided to emergency management and public safety agencies to aid in their responses to declared emergencies or major disasters.

MATOC website: To access MATOC travel information, you may go to their website at www.matoc.org and click on the Traveler Info tab to access real time traffic information. Under the Traveler Info tab, users can click on the Traffic View link (www.trafficview.org) to see what's going on in real time in the NCR as it relates to roadways. This tab also has links to MATOC Alerts (via Twitter/Facebook) as well as the individual agency's traveler information (511) websites.

Additional Resources

To get the latest information on weather and road conditions, as well as school and office closings during snow emergencies, tune in to local radio and television outlets, or check the Web sites or social media venues of local governments.

COG Public Information Officers

(Listed alphabetically by Jurisdiction / Agency)

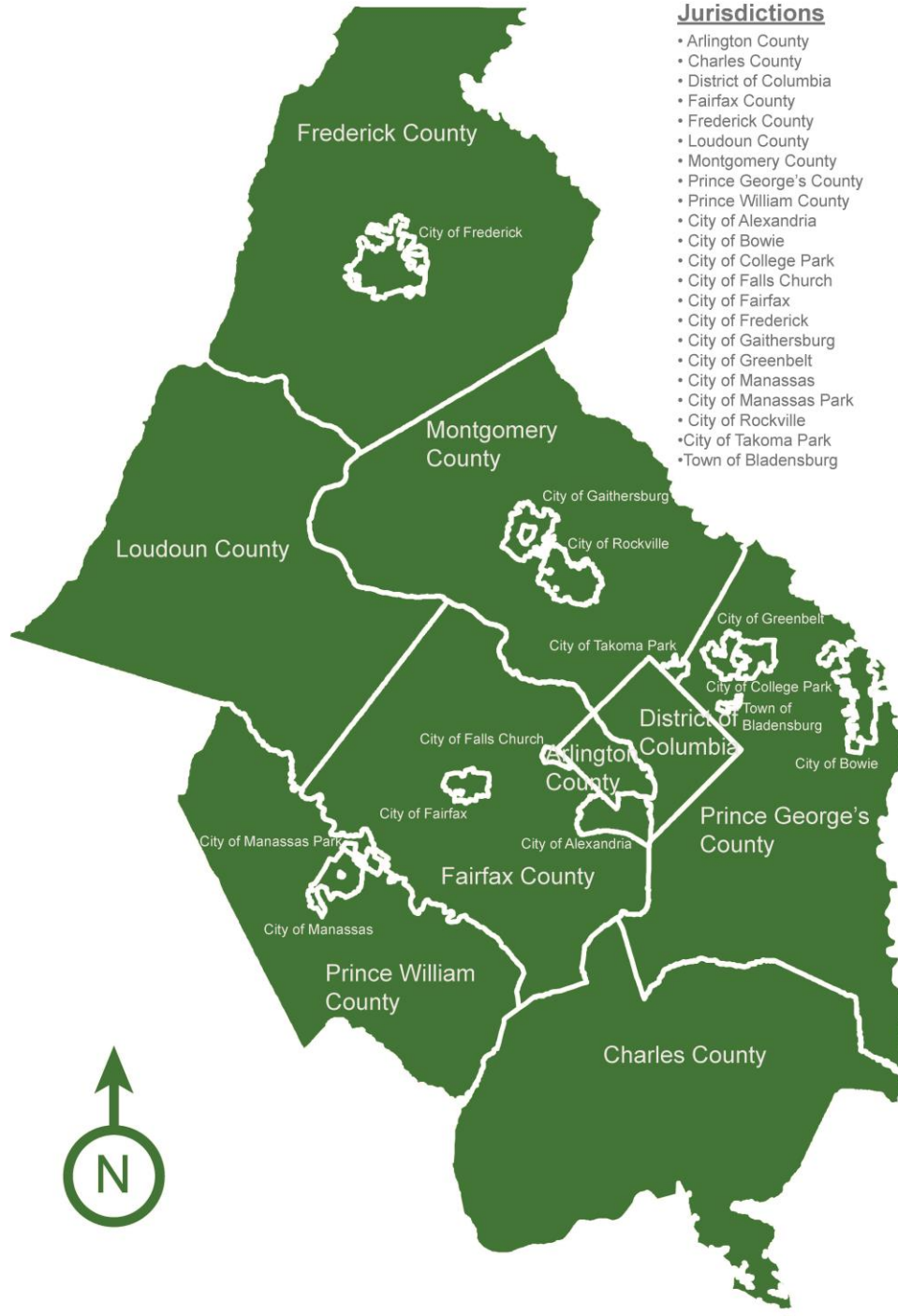
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National Capital Region



Thank You:

Thank you EVERYONE for your personal involvement and attention to the many necessary plans and tasks that go into preparing for each year's winter weather season in the National Capital Region. Thank you for your support to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments as we ALL collaborate to mitigate the impact of the anticipated winter weather storms and potential risks associated with huge amounts of snow, ice and bitter cold weather. Thank you for your unwavering dedication to our local, state and federal agencies who make up the regional COG Snow Core team.

Sincerely,

*The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Snow Core Group*

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