



## NEWS ADVISORY

Jan. 19, 2012

For immediate release

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### **Snowstorm Message from Mayor Engen**

The following message is from Mayor John Engen this morning:

**Since nature has delivered a winter's worth of snow in a couple of days, we need to work together as neighbors to keep each other safe; we also need to be patient with each other as we manage this big winter storm. We plan for events just like this one at the City of Missoula, and we're following our plan.**

City of Missoula snow crews are working around the clock to keep our major streets open and passable for emergency traffic. Keeping those streets clear must be our priority, and that means that many residential streets won't see a plow for a day or two. As much as we'd like to be everywhere, we're deploying plows with the whole community's interest in mind, which may mean temporary inconvenience for individuals. Again, we ask your patience. Stay home if you can. Please do your best to clear your sidewalks and, if you're able, help a neighbor who may not be physically able to shovel their snow.

**If you have an emergency, please use one of these numbers listed in this message to contact us, and we'll do our best to help.**

**Natural events like this snow storm test us a bit, but I know Missoulians are up to the test. Be safe and good to one another and we'll get through this storm just fine.**

And here's some snow news:

- Missoula streets are prioritized in the Street Division's Snow and Ice Control Plan in four categories: Priority 1, Priority 2, Priority 3 and residential streets. The Plan works on the premise that public need for safe streets is greater on high-volume streets and at locations of stopping, turning or starting movements. The priorities are assigned on the basis of traffic volumes, steepness of hills, proximity of schools, access to businesses, public transit routes and logical grid patterns.

**Today, Priority 1 streets have been plowed and will continue to be plowed as snow continues to fall. Street crews are starting on Priority 2 streets and will continue that**

**work Friday. They will start work on residential streets early next week, sooner if conditions allow. Crews are working around the clock. See the Priority Map at <http://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/DocumentView.aspx?DID=625>.**

The Street Division has 22 full-time staff members. Its biggest shift is 3:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., when they staff 14 people. Their equipment includes six deicer/plows, five sander/plows, one sander and one deicer unit. The Traffic Services Division also does snow removal, mostly with walk-behind equipment.

- Parks and Recreation staff has prioritized the areas they plow. They are focusing today on main commuter trails; sidewalks in the downtown area; Safe Routes to School; and parks with sidewalks along main thoroughfares. They will be unable to plow most parks in the South Hills, the Upper Rattlesnake, North side and West side, Fort Missoula and all sidewalks along Reserve Street. Once the storm passes, they will return to those areas. That will take several days to a week.
- Currents Aquatics Center is open today, but all swim lessons are canceled to keep the need to travel to a minimum. No make-up lessons are scheduled yet, but swim students will learn of alternatives at their next lessons. Quickstart Youth Tennis is also canceled today and will have similar make-up arrangements.
- Don't forget the need for residents and business owners to keep sidewalks clear of snow and ice and to clear them by 9 a.m. Please don't shovel snow into bike lanes, against fire hydrants, onto a road shoulder or curb, into a handicap parking space, into a public transit loading area or an emergency access area.
- If you have an emergency, please call 911. The Street Division can be reached at 552-6360. The Police Department main desk is 552-6300. To report sidewalks that have not been cleared at specific addresses, call 552-6345.

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