

Gardner City Hall  
Office of Michael J. Nicholson

## **Storm Situation Update #1: January 25, 2:47pm**

This afternoon at 1:30pm, Myself along with members of the Administration met to discuss our procedures for the storm that is set to hit Gardner later this evening. This meeting included Executive Aide Colin Smith, DPW Director Dane Arnold, Police Chief Eric McAvene, Fire Chief Greg Lagoy, Emergency Management Director Paul Topolski, HR Director Debra Pond, School Facilities Director Wayne Anderson, and Building Commissioner Roland Jean.

DPW Crews are already out pretreating the streets. We are down some staff due to vacancies and COVID, leaving three plow routes having to be covered by other drivers, which may make plow passing times a little longer than usual but all areas of the City will still be covered.

My office and Director Topolski have been in contact with the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency ("MEMA") and will continue to be as this storm moves forward. As was stated yesterday, the main concern with this storm is the amount of weight currently on tree branches and utility wires from the last two storms and concerns for further power outages. (the latest broadcast from MEMA is attached to this email) Emergency Overnight Shelters are opened in events when individuals have had power out for a period of longer than 36 hours. While National Grid has basically fully restored power to all areas of the City, since this comes immediately after the last storm, we are treating any power outages for periods longer than three (3) hours as an extension of those outages and will be moving forward with the City's Emergency Management Plan.

As such, the following has been implemented:

There is an on-street parking ban this evening from 8:00pm to 7:30am tomorrow morning (1/26). This elongated time should give the DPW enough time to adequately clear all roads of not just snow and ice, but also any downed trees.

Additional Fire Fighters and Police Officers have been re-called on overtime shifts to be ready for any increased call volumes that may be experienced as a result of the storm.

The City's CERT Trailer and Sleeping Cot Trailer have been staged at the Gardner Middle School outside the cafeteria. We will be following the layout used in the 2008 ice storm where sleeping cots were set up in hallways with other areas reserved for individuals with medical issues, the cafeteria open for food purposes, and the gym open for recreational activities. Please note that **IF** the shelter is deemed necessary, school must be canceled for the day since our shelter facility is a school building. The cafeteria at the Middle School has also been stocked with food to help accommodate those who may be staying there. This location would be staffed by the CERT crew and police officers.

**IN THE EVENT**, that the City's Emergency Shelter has to be opened at the Middle School, The Gardner Senior Center becomes activated as a resting center for all National Grid Crews and any first responders who are dealing with the situation. This includes cots for temporary rest periods, food, and other things associated with this work.

In the meantime, Perry Auditorium is currently being set up as a warming center. Since our normal two other locations used for this purpose have other designations- with the Community Room at the Police Station being the City's Emergency Operations Center, and the Senior Center being used for responder headquarters. Whether or not the shelter is opened, this will be available if residents start losing power.

Whatever the case may be, no calls will be made until after the snow, ice, sleet, and rain have stopped falling. This is so that we don't have people driving in unsafe road conditions.

Respectfully,

Mike Nicholson

**Michael J. Nicholson**

Mayor of the City of Gardner

Gardner City Hall, Rm 125

95 Pleasant St

Gardner, MA 01440