



Winter Storm  
Teller County Emergency Operations  
Incident Guide A  
November 18, 2021

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**LEAD AGENCY** \_\_\_\_\_ **1**

**SUPPORTING AGENCIES** \_\_\_\_\_ **1**

**PURPOSE** \_\_\_\_\_ **1**

**POLICIES** \_\_\_\_\_ **1**

**SITUATION** \_\_\_\_\_ **1**

**ASSUMPTIONS** \_\_\_\_\_ **2**

**CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS** \_\_\_\_\_ **2**

    Class I Storm \_\_\_\_\_ **2**

    Class II Storm \_\_\_\_\_ **3**

    Class III Storm \_\_\_\_\_ **3**

**RESPONSIBILITIES** \_\_\_\_\_ **3**

    County Administrator \_\_\_\_\_ **3**

    Director Of Public Works \_\_\_\_\_ **3**

    Director Of Emergency Management \_\_\_\_\_ **3**

    Sheriff’s Department \_\_\_\_\_ **4**

    Logistics & Finance \_\_\_\_\_ **4**

    County Attorney \_\_\_\_\_ **4**

    GIS \_\_\_\_\_ **4**

    City Of Woodland Park & Cripple Creek \_\_\_\_\_ **5**

    Department Of Human Services \_\_\_\_\_ **5**

    All Other Teller County Divisions Or Departments \_\_\_\_\_ **5**

**TERMINOLOGY** \_\_\_\_\_ **5**

**Storm Warnings** \_\_\_\_\_ **5**

        Heavy Snow Warning \_\_\_\_\_ **5**

        Blizzard Warnings \_\_\_\_\_ **5**

        Severe Weather Watch \_\_\_\_\_ **5**

        Severe Weather Warning \_\_\_\_\_ **5**

        Severe Blizzard Warnings \_\_\_\_\_ **5**

        Cold Wave Warnings \_\_\_\_\_ **5**

        Hazardous Driving (Travelers’) Warnings \_\_\_\_\_ **6**

        Stockmen’s Warnings \_\_\_\_\_ **6**

**Ice And Snow** \_\_\_\_\_ **6**

        Ice Storm \_\_\_\_\_ **6**

        Sleet \_\_\_\_\_ **6**

        Snow \_\_\_\_\_ **6**

        Snow Flurries \_\_\_\_\_ **6**

        Snow Squalls \_\_\_\_\_ **6**

        Blowing And Drifting Snow \_\_\_\_\_ **6**

        Blizzards \_\_\_\_\_ **6**

**APPENDIX A** \_\_\_\_\_ **6**

## **LEAD AGENCY**

- Teller County Public Works

## **SUPPORTING AGENCIES**

- Teller County Sheriff's Office
- Woodland Park & Cripple Creek Police Department(s)
- Fire Protection Districts in Teller County
- Cripple Creek and Victor School District RE-1
- Woodland Park School District RE-2
- American Red Cross
- The Salvation Army
- Teller County Public Health
- Teller County Human Services
- COVOAD
- Private Sector resources

## **PURPOSE**

This Incident Guide has been prepared to facilitate a coordinated response and assign responsibilities to reduce potential loss of life and to quickly restore essential services following a major winter storm.

## **POLICIES**

The County Administrator or other identified official in the main plan may issue a declaration of emergency, which may make regional and state response resources available for assistance. The declaration may also make response and recovery funding available as well.

## **SITUATION**

1. All areas of Teller County are vulnerable to major winter storms. Isolation from services and impassable roadways present the most significant danger to the largest number of people. Longtime residents of the area are usually well equipped to handle routine and even severe winter weather, but with the increase in tourists participating in outdoor winter recreation and the influx of new residents, we must plan for many unprepared people.
2. Large-scale loss of life or property does not normally occur as a result of a winter storm, however, any persons caught out in the storm and stranded motorists are in extreme danger. Those people with special needs isolated in homes are also a problem due to power shortages, lack of communications, and failure of heating sources.
3. Loss of utilities in an urban area can create a critical situation in a short period of time for a large number of people. Medical assistance may become critical. The demand for emergency services poses the greatest difficulty, along with locating and rescuing special needs persons or those people that put themselves in harm's way unnecessarily.
4. Secondary effects of a large snowstorm must be planned for, such as structure collapses, transportation disruption, hazardous materials, power failure, and flooding.

## **ASSUMPTIONS**

1. This plan supports the Public Works plan for snow and ice removal (APPENDIX – A, attached to this Guide).
2. Winter storms will fluctuate in size and intensity and may become severe with little warning.
3. A winter storm will usually affect the entire region to some degree, but severe impacts may be localized.
4. Residents will be advised of potential conditions through a variety of means, including: National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) radio, Emergency Alert System (EAS) broadcasts, standard radio announcements, Social Media, TV announcements and other warning tools.

## **CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS**

1. All Divisions and/or Departments shall provide necessary manpower, equipment and resources to assist in response to, stabilization of and recovery from any planned event, emergency, disaster or other type of incident as outlined in the Teller County Emergency Operations Plan, Annexes, Guides and any Continuity of Operations Plans or Standard Operating Procedures as requested or needed.
2. Unlike some other types of emergencies or disasters, Teller County resources will be involved in a response to a severe winter storm in their routine business. Teller County may request additional assistance when capabilities and resources are exceeded. Such assistance, when authorized, will be provided by city, regional partners or State agencies operating under their own authority, or as part of an effort coordinated by the Division of Emergency Management operating on behalf of the Governor. In these instances, the Governor may declare part or all of the State a disaster and request assistance from the Federal government if the capabilities and resources of both local and State governments are exceeded.
3. Teller County will provide usual services in responding to a winter storm according to their internal policies. Only when a storm is of such magnitude that emergency declarations are necessary, will additional assistance be requested from the Division of Emergency Management. Safety of personnel is the priority during any storm response.
4. These procedures shall address operations by three (3) categories of storm events: Class I, Class II, and Class III snowstorms.

## **CLASS I STORM**

This storm category is generally snow and ice conditions with a maximum of two (2) to six (6) inches of accumulation and little or no drifting snow. This storm type is typically twelve (12) hours or less in duration. A Class I storm is handled by the normal snow crew responding in accordance with normal operations for a snow event.

## **CLASS II STORM**

This storm category consists of a snow accumulation of six (6) to eighteen (18) inches or greater, possibly with drifting snow. Typically, a Class II storm is twelve (12) hours or longer in duration. A Class II storm would be handled with the normal snow crew, using both light duty vehicles and tandem trucks with plow and sander attachments and road graders.

## **CLASS III STORM**

This storm category consists of snow accumulation of eighteen (18) inches or greater, usually with drifting snow and low pavement temperatures. This type of storm can last more than 24 hours, causing hazardous driving conditions and potential emergency situations. A Class III storm would be handled by the normal snow crew with possible assistance from state and private resources. All equipment would be made available on an as-needed basis.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

1. Determine, directly or via delegation, when a winter storm is of such severity that it would be unsafe to have nonessential County workers respond to their jobs and to make the necessary announcements by telephone, radio and television in coordination with the Board of County Commissioners.
2. Activate the Teller County Emergency Operations Plan.
3. Declare a Disaster Emergency when/where appropriate in order to initiate additional resources to include funding for basic recovery of essential life services.

### **DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS**

1. Maintain communications and advise dispatch of current conditions in all areas of Teller County.
2. Activate snow removal plan, plowing, barricading, and ice removal and determine need for road and/or facilities closures.
3. Upon notification of snow emergency conditions, provide crews and equipment to assist in snow removal, rescue operations, necessary transportation of staff to work assignments, establishment of barricades and roadway restoration, as needed.
4. Roads will be plowed and sanded according to a plan of priorities with life safety as the first guiding priority. Additional assistance will be prioritized to provide networks of roadways open to provide a transportation system for emergency vehicles such as fire department, law enforcement, and rescue personnel.
5. Provide emergency services such as transportation of supplies, food, medical equipment or other designated services as deemed necessary.
6. During severe snow or blowing snow (white outs), or other conditions that could endanger personnel, plowing and sanding can be suspended at the discretion of the Public Works Director or Sheriff.

### **DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

1. Monitor weather forecasts and prepare to coordinate responses as needed.

2. Coordinate Teller County response to requests for assistance from local entities and organizations.
3. Activate and staff the Teller County Emergency Operations Center, if needed, and coordinate assistance following established EOC procedures.
4. Maintain communications with local jurisdictions, the Division of Emergency Management, other state agencies, and the Governor's office regarding the status of the storm, available resources and recovery efforts.
5. Determine evacuation orders if necessary.
6. Establish evacuation shelters and alert ESF #6 and/or Red Cross for assistance with sheltering needs.

### **SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT**

1. Ensure proper staffing levels and scheduling needs are met to deal with the incident.
2. Maintain communications and advise dispatch of current conditions in all areas of Teller County.
3. Provide appropriate traffic control measures to include Accident Alert Status, clear and store vehicles impeding snow removal from major and minor arterials and any established evacuation routes.
4. If roads become impassable, patrol will utilize strike team protocols of two (2) Officers, one (1) patrol vehicle, one (1) snow plow and (1) ambulance or fire unit to provide timely response to emergency calls for service.
5. Assist in evacuation of stranded motorists/ population.
6. Provide security as needed at shelters, hospital or emergency distribution Points and media centers.

### **LOGISTICS & FINANCE**

1. Procurement of emergency related supplies and materials and administration of vendor contracts for emergency services and resources.
2. Resource tracking, record keeping and documentation of disaster related costs and financial commitments.

### **COUNTY ATTORNEY**

1. Provision of legal counsel and assistance to the County Administrator, Director of Emergency Management, Commissioners and other officials before, during and after the incident.
2. Draft and/ or review emergency contracts, special contracts, Memoranda of Understanding, Mutual Aid Agreements and Intergovernmental Agreements.
3. Preparation of legal documents such as disaster declarations, special resolutions or regulations required to facilitate emergency operations.

### **GIS**

1. Provide mapping or other geospatial information as required.

## **CITY OF WOODLAND PARK & CRIPPLE CREEK**

1. Provide support as requested.

## **DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

1. Director of Human Services – Administer mass care assistance programs as outlined by the ESF-6 functions.
2. Red Cross/School District/ Teller County - Provide shelters and provisions for evacuated or stranded people in accordance with established procedures.

## **ALL OTHER TELLER COUNTY DIVISIONS OR DEPARTMENTS**

1. Identify the status of ALL employees to support any and all requests for assistance by the County Administrator, Director of Emergency Management, UC/IC during and after the event.

## **TERMINOLOGY**

### **STORM WARNINGS**

#### **HEAVY SNOW WARNING**

Issued when a snowfall of four (4) inches or more is expected within a 12-hour period or a snowfall of six (6) inches or more is expected within a 24-hour period.

#### **BLIZZARD WARNINGS**

Issued when winds with speeds of at least 35 mph are accompanied by considerable falling or blowing snow and cold temperatures of 20 degrees F or lower are expected to prevail for an extended period of time.

#### **SEVERE WEATHER WATCH**

Issued by the National Weather Service when conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop. A watch is usually issued for large areas involving many counties.

#### **SEVERE WEATHER WARNING**

Urgent message issued by the National Weather Service to state that severe weather is imminent or is occurring.

#### **SEVERE BLIZZARD WARNINGS**

Issued when blizzards of extreme proportions are expected and indicate wind with speeds of at least 45 mph plus a great density of falling or blowing snow and a temperature of 10 degrees F or lower.

#### **COLD WAVE WARNINGS**

Indicate an expected rapid fall in temperature within a 24-hour period, which will require substantially increased protection to agricultural, industrial, commercial and social activities. The temperature falls and minimum temperatures required to justify cold wave warnings vary with the changing of the season and with geographic location. Regardless of the month or the section of the country, a cold wave warning is a red flag alert to the public that during a forthcoming forecast period a change to very cold weather will require greater than normal protective measures.

### **HAZARDOUS DRIVING (TRAVELERS') WARNINGS**

Issued to indicate that falling, blowing or drifting snow, freezing rain or drizzle, sleet or strong winds will make driving difficult.

### **STOCKMEN'S WARNINGS**

Alerts ranchers and farmers that livestock will require protection from a large accumulation of snow or ice, a rapid drop in temperature, or strong winds.

## **ICE AND SNOW**

### **ICE STORM**

Freezing rain or drizzle is called an ice storm. Moisture falls in liquid form, but freezes upon impact.

### **SLEET**

Sleet is identified as frozen raindrops (ice pellets) that bounce when hitting the ground. Sleet in sufficient depth causes hazardous driving.

### **SNOW**

Snow in a forecast without qualifying words such as occasional or intermittent means that the snowfall is of a steady nature, and will continue for several hours.

### **SNOW FLURRIES**

Snow falling for short durations of time at intermittent periods. One of the problems with snow flurries is that most frequently visibility is greatly reduced. Accumulations from snow flurries are generally small.

### **SNOW SQUALLS**

Are brief, intense falls of snow and are comparable to summer rain showers. Usually accompanied by gusty surface winds.

### **BLOWING AND DRIFTING SNOW**

Is used in forecasts where loose snow on the ground or falling snow or both is being blown about to a degree that horizontal visibility is greatly restricted. After a substantial snow has ended and strong winds start blowing and the snow is whipped up from the ground this is referred to as a ground blizzard.

### **BLIZZARDS**

Are the most hazardous and perilous of all winter storms. Characterized by low temperatures and by strong winds bearing large amounts of snow. Most of the snow accompanying a blizzard is in the form of fine, powdery particles of snow that are whipped up in such great quantities that at times visibility is only a few yards.

## APPENDIX A

### PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT SNOW AND ICE CONTROL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

#### SNOW AND ICE CONTROL

The Public Works Division of Teller County shall be responsible for the Snow and Ice Control Program. The Road and Bridge Division will have primary responsibility, to include the establishment of routes, scheduling, and mobilization of manpower and equipment required for snow and ice events. The program will be utilized in both the Teller area, as well as in the surrounding Cities and area. The Road and Bridge Supervisor shall establish and implement efficient procedures for snow and ice control operations. These procedures shall address the issues of establishing routes, scheduling manpower, assigning equipment, classifying particular snow storm events, initiating and managing operations, maintaining equipment (with assistance from the Fleet and Facilities Division), AND KEEPING RELEVANT RECORDS. These procedures shall address operations by three (3) categories of storm events: Class I, Class II, and Class III snowstorms.

#### CLASS I STORM

This storm category is generally snow and ice conditions with a maximum of two (2) to six (6) inches of accumulation and little or no drifting snow. This storm type is typically twelve (12) hours or less in duration. A Class I storm is handled by the normal snow crew responding in 1 ½ ton vehicles with plow and sander attachments.

#### CLASS II STORM

This storm category consists of a snow accumulation of six (6) to eighteen (18) inches or greater, possibly with drifting snow. Typically, a Class II storm is twelve (12) hours or longer in duration. A Class II storm would be handled with a normal snow crew, using both 1 ½ ton vehicles and 12-yard trucks with plow and sander attachments and road graders.

#### CLASS III STORM

This storm category consists of snow accumulation of eighteen (18) inches or greater, usually with drifting snow and low pavement temperatures. This type of storm can last more than 24 hours, causing hazardous driving conditions and potential emergency situations. A Class III storm would be handled by the normal snow crew with possible assistance from private contractors. All equipment would be made available on an as-needed basis.

#### SNOW AND ICE OPERATIONS

In the interest of traffic safety, emergency service provisions, and reasonable levels of mobility within the County, regular snow and ice control **routes** shall be established and generally prioritized as follows:

##### Primary Routes

- Arterial Roads, school routes, and County Facilities

##### Secondary Routes

- Collector Roads, steep hills

### Residential Routes

- Routes typically not serviced during Class I and II storms

The Road and Bridge Supervisor will establish snow crews to provide the snow and ice control services for the program. The crews will consist of a primary “On-Call” crew and a “Rotation” crew. The “On-Call” crew will be the first crew activated. The “Rotation” crew will be available to relieve the “On-Call” crew after they have worked for a 10-12 – hour shift. Timing will be determined by the Supervisor.

All personnel listed as part of the snow and ice control operations must comply with their designated weekly duty. Proper notification for time off is to be directed through the “On-Call” Foreman. It is the employees’ responsibility to have a replacement scheduled for their absence if there is any chance of a snow and ice event.

### **CLASS III (SEVERE SNOW STORM)**

Upon the declaration of a severe snowstorm warning by the County Manager or his designee, an Emergency Operations Command Center (EOCC) may be established. The EOCC is located at the Centennial Building in Cripple Creek. Procedures that will be followed are outlined in the Emergency Management Policy. The Snow and Ice Policies and Procedures will serve as a supplement to and as a part of the overall emergency procedure and plan.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **SNOW AND ICE CONTROL**

The Road and Bridge Supervisor shall be responsible for the management of the Snow and Ice Control Program, in conformance with the Teller County practices and the following procedures.

### **TRAINING**

A full day snow and ice control training event may be scheduled for both the main County facility at Teller, as well as at the Cripple Creek facility. This is an opportunity designed to familiarize or refresh both new employees and experienced operators with the scope and details of the snow plow truck. The focus of this training is to sharpen skills and have the entire snow and ice control staff prepared for response to any snow emergency. This training is required for all personnel who are engaged in operating snowplowing equipment.

### **SCHEDULING**

The Supervisor shall establish snow and ice control crews. These will alternate on-call and rotation responsibility on a scheduled basis, pending the volume of storms. Once the Supervisor has assigned crew members, the assignment is permanent unless the Supervisor authorizes a change.

### **ROUTES**

Snow and ice control routes and assignments shall be established in accordance with the priorities assigned to the County road system. There shall be an adequate number of routes established to insure that the Primary Routes are plowed before moving to the Secondary Routes. Plow operators may be required to return to clearing Primary Routes before finishing Secondary Routes, if Primary Routes become snow covered during Secondary Route clearing. Plowing roads during a class II or Class III storm can vary greatly, depending upon storm intensity, temperature, time of day, and length of storm.

The Supervisor shall ensure all personnel are familiar with their routes, assignments and associated equipment to which they will be assigned prior to October 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **RESPONSE TIME**

The Supervisor or his designee shall initiate snow and ice control operations by notifying the appropriate crew members to report for duty by a telephone or cell phone call. Once contacted by message, the crew member is to call the Foreman in charge of operations for further instructions. If the crew members have not contacted the Foreman in charge of operations within 30 minutes of the notification, their Foreman will be contacted during a regular shift work week. Once the snow shift crew is given a report time, they shall report to their duty station within a reasonable time depending upon conditions, preferably within 35 minutes, and be prepared to start their snow and ice control routes.

## **SICK LEAVE**

Crew members on sick leave during the most recent regular working day shall not be placed on call-status until the next regular working day has been worked, unless approved by the Supervisor or his designee. Sick leave taken on the next regular working day following snow and ice control duty may have to be supported by a physician's statement, at the recommendation of the Public Works Director and approval of the Human Resources Supervisor.

A crew member who becomes sick while on on-call status shall immediately notify the Foreman, who will arrange for their replacement. Crew members wishing to be released from snow and ice control duties, other than for sick leave (i.e. vacation) must make arrangement with an alternate snow route driver. The Foreman in charge of operations must approve these changes before the crew member is relieved of his/her duties.

## **VACATION**

All employees assigned to on-call for snow and ice duties must supply in writing (email) a request for time off. It is the employee's responsibility to let his/her Foreman know of desired dates and timeframe requesting to be off. A suitable replacement must be confirmed to relieve them of snow duty requirements.

## **OVERTIME**

Regular employees who work overtime hours shall be compensated in accordance with the County's pay plan.

## **CREW CONDUCT**

Crew members placed on on-call status shall be continually available for call-out by telephone or cell phone. Crew members must be prepared to quickly respond to duty when on call, and must remain physically and mentally alert at all times when on duty; therefore, during these time periods, employees must not use or consume any alcohol or drugs. Individuals found in violation of these stipulations may be subject to corrective and/or disciplinary action. Crew members in all respect shall abide by the provisions and regulations of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations part 383, 390 through 397, and 399 of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Any person using any type of oral medication must notify the Foreman of the known side effects, if any. The Foreman, upon obtaining the advice of a medical professional as appropriate, will determine if such employee is fit for duty.

**RECORD KEEPING**

Crew members are to record relevant information as required by the Division. All paperwork will be submitted to the Foreman in charge at the end of their respective shifts.

**WORK MEAL/BREAKS**

Crew members may be allowed a periodic work break. The timing of these work breaks shall be at the discretion of the Foreman in charge of operations, or his designee. Crew members will be allowed a meal break in addition to their work breaks, but may be required work through normally-designated break or meal times. Snow and ice events are considered emergency events. During an emergency event all normal work and driving regulations are waived.

The operator can drive himself or herself the shortest distance practical to get to a gas station, 7-11 or restaurant to use the facilities or get a meal. These times do not need to be entered on the log sheet.

**FLEET MAINTENANCE PROVIDER RESPONSIBILITY**

Fleet Maintenance will place one or more mechanics on call whenever the snow and ice control crew is placed on on-call status. Fleet Maintenance will be notified as to what class of snowstorm is expected. The need for mechanics on duty is as follows:

<b>CLASS I STORM</b>	A minimum of one (1) mechanic
<b>CLASS II STORM</b>	A minimum of two (2) mechanics
<b>CLASS III STORM</b>	A minimum of two (2) mechanics working in continuous twelve-hour shifts, (rotate welder as needed) and Foreman (rotated as needed)

**SNOW AND ICE CONTROL RESPONSIBILITIES**

**CLASS I STORM**

Normal snow routes will be the responsibility of the Road and Bridge crew, in accordance with established snow routes and crew schedules.

**CLASS II STORM**

Class II snowstorm responsibilities will be the same as a Class I storm, with the following exceptions, at the direction of the Road and Bridge Supervisor:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Priority – County employee and equipment parking lots
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Priority – After completing the Primary Routes, Secondary Routes, including graveled roads are to be addressed. Note: Primary Routes may require 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> applications before completing the Secondary Routes

While under a Class II event status with potential that a Class III event is imminent, the Supervisor will direct his staff to place the outside contractors on “Stand by” to secure adequate equipment for their response. As the forecast indicates, a tentative start time may be designated by the Supervisor. This start time will then coincide with the 12-hour shift times for the Supervisors\*.

**CLASS III STORM**

Upon the declaration of a severe snowstorm warning by the County Administrator or other Official, an Emergency Operations Command Center (EOCC) may be opened to coordinate operations and keep the public informed. The EOCC will be managed by the County Emergency Management Director.

The Supervisor shall activate the established list of employees set to respond to the Class III Storm.

Normal crew assignments will begin twelve-hour shift rotations to provide twenty-four hours (24 hour) coverage and back-up personnel will be assigned accordingly. These shift rotations will continue until the snow emergency is passed.

In addition to the primary and back-up crews and equipment, personnel and equipment from private contractors may be utilized.

## **PRIVATE CONTRACTORS**

A list of private contractors may be compiled annually via an RFP put out by the Director of Public Works. Representatives from each company will be contacted to provide the following prior to the snow season:

- The name of the responsible supervisor(s) for the contractor, and twenty-four hours (24 hour) contact information
- A list of operators, cell phone numbers and assigned equipment
- Assurance that the equipment will be supplied with wheel chains for use on the equipment
- A list of all equipment placed on “Stand By” and at what time. Note: Visible numeric information should be on all equipment
- A proposed shift change for the contractor, time and new staff replacements
- A determination if the contractor plans on using County fuel (to be paid by the contractor to the County)
- Hourly costs will be determined through the RFP process

## **ACCIDENTS, INCIDENTS AND SAFETY**

If any operator is involved in any accident, call 911 immediately. If a contractor is involved in an accident or incident that causes property damage, the Supervisor is to notify the Director of Public Works and they may notify the EOC. 911 is to be contacted immediately for any injury accidents. The Supervisor is to document as much of the incident as possible – contractor name, operator name, location, time and date, description of the damage and a photo, if possible. All accidents need to have an Incident or Accident Report completed and submitted.