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# Elgin area braces for giant snowfall as schools close, plows ready

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By MIKE DANAHEY  
COURIER-NEWS | FEB 08, 2018



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Snow started falling near the Gail Borden Library in downtown Elgin early in the evening on Feb. 8, 2018. (Janelle Walker / Courier-News)

As the Elgin area readied for the area's biggest snowstorm so far this year, city officials reminded people late Thursday of precautions they should take.

Elgin-area U46 canceled school Friday in anticipation of the storm that has some predicting more than a foot of snow by Friday night and more to come over the weekend.

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"Snowstorms always bring commuting challenges. Not everyone can stay home, but if you can that's optimal," Elgin Police Public Information Office Kristie Hilton said. "If you can't, drivers should allow extra time, drive slow, undistracted, and leave adequate stopping distance between vehicles. And snowplows need to be given room to operate safely."

Hilton also reminded people to make sure their vehicles have plenty of gas in case there is an unplanned situation where vehicles are running for extended periods of time.

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"Please remain mindful of posted snow routes and make alternate plans for parking over the next few days. Those who do not live on a snow route can assist in the cleanup effort by doing the same," Hilton said.

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Hilton also reminds people to check on elderly or at-risk neighbors, especially those who live alone.

"Bring pets inside and when the shoveling begins, dress appropriately and do not overexert," Hilton said.

If an emergency occurs or someone needs special assistance, Hilton reminded residents to call 911 or 847-289-2700.

Elgin Fire Chief Dave Schmidt reminded people to keep the area around fire hydrants cleared to help firefighters find them in an emergency.

Schmidt also said residents of homes with high-efficiency furnaces should make sure snowdrifts aren't blocking flues on the sides of the houses.

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Space heaters should be kept at least three feet from items that might be flammable and people should avoid using such devices with extension cords, Schmidt said.

Elgin Communications Specialist Molly Center recommends residents download the Elgin 311 mobile app and check the City of Elgin Facebook Page or Twitter account. Residents can always call 311 or 847-931-6001 Monday-Friday 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. if they cannot access those other options.

Given the impact of the coming storm, Center said Elgin will have information posted on the city's website homepage too.

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"General concerns or requests can be emailed to [elgin311@cityofelgin.org](mailto:elgin311@cityofelgin.org), but the call center will not be open outside of regular business hours. Any emergency situation should be

Like every snow event, Elgin plow drivers will be cutting the centers of streets throughout all routes while the storm is in progress to ensure streets are passable. Pushback does not occur until the snow stops, Center said.

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School District 114's canceled classes for Friday, 11 a.m. Thursday, CEO Tony  
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and others who commented shortly after the announcement.

"Phone call on its way. I canceled school for tomorrow, Friday, Feb. 9," Sanders wrote.

Other Elgin schools that had canceled classes for Friday ahead of the storm included Elgin Academy, Harvest Christian Academy, and St. Mary School.

By noon Thursday, Community Unit School District 300 had canceled all after-school activities that were to take place after 5 p.m. with buildings closed for the evening, except for those with after-school care programs.

According to the D300 Facebook page, the early closing would allow crews to pretreat school parking lots, sidewalks, and entrances and, with the flu going around, give time to continue sanitizing.

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District spokesman Anthony McGinn said parents and students should expect an announcement late Thursday evening on whether classes would be canceled Friday.

At St. Charles School District 303, a decision on whether school would close will be made Friday morning and families will be notified about 5:30 a.m., said spokeswoman Carol Smith.



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evening.

Elgin Community College was to close at 5 p.m. Thursday, and also announced it would shut down Friday.

East Dundee officials announced Wednesday afternoon that Village Hall and Police Front Office would be closed on Friday.

A total of five to six inches of snow was expected overnight, with another five to six falling throughout the day Friday and into Friday

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For anyone traveling who has to travel by car out of the area, statewide road conditions can be found online [www.gettingaroundillinois.com](http://www.gettingaroundillinois.com) and on the Illinois Department of Transportation Facebook page and Twitter feed.

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*Freelance reporter Erin Sauder and staff reporter Rafael Guerrero contributed to this article.*

[mdanahey@tribpub.com](mailto:mdanahey@tribpub.com)

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