



January 29, 2014

For immediate release

## Mayor Sandy Stimpson provides update on Winter Storm Leon

MOBILE, Ala. - Mayor Sandy Stimpson today urged citizens to use extreme caution and stay off roadways as freezing, dangerous conditions remain across the Mobile area due to the continued effects of Winter Storm Leon.

A combination of heavy precipitation and freezing temperatures has created treacherous road conditions and power outages across the Mobile area.

City government remained closed Wednesday with the exception of emergency personnel. The National Weather Service is forecasting very low temperatures today and a sheet of packed ice remains on area roads and bridges.

The City is monitoring the severe weather and coordinating with Mobile County and the State of Alabama to ensure the safety of residents.

“The City is taking all necessary precautions to keep our citizens safe. We are asking people to stay off the roads unless it is an emergency,” said Mayor Stimpson. “The best approach is to use common sense, stay sheltered and wait for weather conditions to improve.”

### **DANGEROUS CONDITIONS**

The City of Mobile is advising all citizens to stay off roadways except in the case of an actual medical emergency. Emergency responders are experiencing a high volume of calls regarding stranded motorists and/or wrecks due to vehicles sliding on iced-over roadways. Mobile Police are also currently working wrecks in both the Wallace and Bankhead Tunnels.

Any road areas, especially those with any incline, are currently an extreme hazard to motorists.

As of this morning, Mobile Police are in the process of placing barricades at the following treacherous intersections and roadways. These areas will not be passable to any motorist under any circumstance:

- Old Shell Road at University Boulevard

- Nevius Road at Hillcrest Road as well as Bush Lane
- Highway 90 at Landsdowne
- Schillinger Road between Cottage Hill and Three Notch Roads
- Museum Drive and Spring Hill Avenue, both at John D. New Road
- Ziegler Road at Forest Hill Drive
- Azalea Road at Cottage Hill, Michael Boulevard and Village Green Drive
- Spring Hill Avenue at Tuthill Lane
- Snow Road at Tanner Williams Road
- Shelby Street at Center Street
- University Boulevard at Airport Boulevard
- Cottage Hill Road between University Boulevard and Knollwood Drive
- Sollie Road between Oxford and Three Notch Road

The following are complete road closures which are not passable at this time:

- Hillcrest Road
- Cochrane Bridge
- Hope Bridge
- I-10 at I-65 interchange
- Eastbound Wallace Tunnel
- Westbound Bankhead Tunnel

The following intersections are being manned by police and are not passable:

- Ziegler Boulevard at Forest Hill Drive
- Moffett Road at Forest Hill Drive
- Old Shell Road at I-65
- Cottage Hill at Knollwood Drive
- Cottage Hill at University Boulevard
- Girby Road at Lloyds Lane as well as Medical Park
- Southbound University Boulevard at Grelot Road

Mobile Police are asking citizens to shelter in place.

“We do not expect improving conditions today as warmer weather is not expected,” said Mobile Police Chief James Barber. “Motorists on the roadways are putting undue strain on our already limited resources.”

Any road areas, especially those with any incline, are currently a severe hazard to motorists. Mobile Police are asking media to continually urge your viewers and readers to stay off the roads for the duration of the day. Please avoid advising motorists how to use caution while driving in these dangerous conditions.

## **EMERGENCY SERVICES**

The City has sufficient manpower to respond to citizens in need of assistance. In some cases, response times may be limited due to road conditions. In case of any emergencies, citizens are encouraged to call 911.

All citizens should take appropriate precautions to protect themselves from the potentially dangerous effects of this weather. Exposure to temperatures near freezing, combined with strong winds, for an extended period of time can cause serious medical problems. Citizens are also encouraged to check on neighbors and the elderly to make sure they are prepared.

### **CITY FACILITIES CLOSED**

Mobile city government offices remain closed today. We will continue to monitor weather and road conditions before making a decision about Thursday.

- Government Plaza, 200 Government Street
- All Mobile Recreation Department facilities
- All Mobile Public Library branches

### **TAKE PRECAUTIONS**

All citizens should take appropriate precautions to protect themselves from the potentially dangerous effects of this weather. Exposure to temperatures near freezing, combined with strong winds, for an extended period of time can cause serious medical problems. Citizens are also encouraged to check on neighbors and the elderly to make sure they are prepared. To be safe, follow these tips while outside:

- Be aware of the wind chill factor;
- Wear layers, hat, and gloves;
- Carry a cell phone; and
- Sprinkle rock salt, cat litter or sand on icy patches.

Citizens are advised to use extra caution when using heaters and generators. Use the following tips to protect your family from carbon monoxide:

- Keep grills, camp stoves, and generators out of the house and garage;
- Locate generators at least 20 feet from the house;
- Do not use appliances such as ovens or stovetops to heat the house. This could cause a build-up of carbon monoxide; and
- Leave your home immediately if the carbon monoxide detector sounds and call 911.

Citizens are encouraged to protect their homes and businesses by dripping their faucets and wrap their pipes.

Citizens should avoid going near any downed tree limbs or power lines.

### **EMERGENCY SHELTERS**

Persons needing shelter will be accepted at the following locations under the following conditions:

- The Salvation Army of Coastal Alabama opened its doors at 1009 Dauphin St. in Mobile for homeless men, women and children at 3 p.m. Monday. They will remain open through Thursday morning and provide breakfast, lunch, dinner, coffee and water to anyone who stops by during emergency operations, according to a news release from the organization.
- The Salvation Army has asked for donations of hot chocolate, coffee, water and food to help deal with the expected influx of people using their services in the coming days. Monetary donations are also being solicited. Two canteens are also being prepared to deal with the potential of widespread power outages and other weather-related emergencies. The canteens will be deployed to provide coffee, hot chocolate and warm meals to any areas under emergency conditions, as needed.
- The Mobile Rescue Mission, a ministry of the Pensacola-based Waterfront Rescue Mission, is also opening its doors to the needy in anticipation of the inclement weather. The shelter at 206 State St. in Mobile will start accepting dinner and nighttime shelter registrations at 3 p.m. They will also serve lunch, which can be reserved starting at 11 a.m. For women and those with children, the Mission will provide transportation to either the Mission's Women's Shelter or an alternative, the group said in a news release. They are asking for donations of blankets, coats, scarves, gloves, sleeping bags and canned or non-perishable foods.

## **ROADWAYS AND BRIDGES**

The City is working in cooperation with the Mobile County Commission and the Alabama Department of Transportation and Development (ALDOT) to prepare to clear roadways and bridges. Icy conditions will create dangerous driving conditions, particularly on elevated roadways and bridges. Motorists should stay off the roads whenever possible. In case of any emergencies, motorists are encouraged to call 911.

ALDOT personnel are continuing to work at priority locations in the Mobile area. Motorists can access the latest updates on real-time traffic and road conditions using the 511 Traveler Information System by dialing 511 from their telephone and saying the route or region about which they are seeking information. Out-of-state travelers can call 1-888-ROAD-511 (1-888-762-3511).

Drivers can check the conditions of Alabama's state and federal highways on ALDOT's website at <http://www.dot.state.al.us/>.

## **WAVE Transit**

The WAVE Transit system will remain closed today due to inclement weather. Regular bus service is tentatively scheduled to resume on Thursday. For more information, call 251-344-6600 or visit [www.thewavetransit.com](http://www.thewavetransit.com) for updates.

## **GARBAGE AND TRASH**

Regular garbage pickups are suspended through Thursday and will resume on regular schedule Friday. Pickups cancelled on Tuesday will be made on Saturday. Pickups cancelled on Thursday will be made on Sunday.

## **MOBILE AREA WATER AND SEWER SYSTEM**

All drainage pump stations are operational.

Due to inclement weather, the offices of Mobile Area Water and Sewer System (MAWSS) will be closed on Wednesday, January 29. Customers needing emergency assistance should contact the 24-hour Customer Care line at 251 694-3165.

## **ALABAMA POWER**

Service has been restored to thousands of customers across the Mobile area this morning. As of 10 a.m. Wednesday, there were 4,300 Alabama Power customers without service, down from 13,600 at 8 a.m.

2,300 of those customers are in the Mobile area, and should have service restored by early afternoon.

Customers with outages can report them from their smartphone at Alabama Power's website, <http://alabamapower.com>, or can call 800-888-2726.

## **MOBILE REGIONAL AIRPORT**

The Mobile Regional Airport did not reopen this morning due to the dynamic weather conditions still present. The airport is evaluating all aspects of weather and road conditions.

Travelers are encouraged to check individual airlines' websites for latest information on delays and cancellations.

Contact information for each of the airlines and car rental agencies serving Mobile Regional Airport are listed below and are available on [www.mobairport.com](http://www.mobairport.com). Information will also be posted on Mobile Regional Airport's Facebook and Twitter pages.

## **VISITOR ATTRACTIONS**

Mobile area hotels remain open with essential personnel. Major attractions are closed today. The Mobile Convention and Visitors Bureau provide hospitality updates on their website at <https://www.facebook.com/VisitMobileBay>.

Mobile 311

Residents are encouraged to call Mobile 311 for non-emergency information related to winter weather. To report downed power lines, call 911.

## **READY.ALABAMA.GOV**

Citizens are encouraged to sign up for email and text message alerts by going to [ready.alabama.gov](http://ready.alabama.gov). This service allows City officials to contact citizens during emergencies, which includes life-threatening weather events, evacuation or shelter in place information, and other pertinent emergency information.

## **IMPORTANT NUMBERS TO KNOW**

- For life threatening emergencies and downed power lines, call 911
- To report a non-life threatening problem or to get information, call 311
- For real-time traffic and road condition, call 511
- Mobile Area Water and Sewer System 24/7 line, call 251-694-3165
- To report power outages, call 800-888-2726