



After Action Report – Winter Weather Event February 2021

Event Start Date: Friday, February 12 at 6:00 p.m.

Event End Date: Sunday, February 28 at 8:00 a.m.

Event Timeline:

Friday, February 12

- Police Department Secured Motel Rooms
- Swift 911 Notification – Sent out emergency numbers and winter weather prep for pipes

Saturday, February 13

- Westlake Fire Engine Arrived
- Police Department Secured Motel Rooms

Sunday, February 14

- Police Department Secured Motel Rooms

Monday, February 15

- City notified by AWR that they would not be performing normal operations or responding to emergency calls. Stated they would be monitoring lift stations remotely and alerting staff to any emergency matters.
- Patrol Officer Connor Emens stuck at the Police Department and Patrol Officer Robert Wissen stuck at the Motel on Loop 1.
- Westlake fire engine immobilized in the parking lot
- Many staff members at home without power/water
- Chief Brady arrived at City Hall
- Swift 911 Notification – Solid waste services suspended and would resume no earlier than February 18

Tuesday, February 16

- Additional police officers arrived and were performing water shut offs for residential leaks
- Council meeting rescheduled to Wednesday, February 24
- Swift 911 Notification – Road conditions deteriorating and bracing for another round of inclement power.
- Many staff members at home without power/water

Wednesday, February 17

- Vicky and Nate arrive – begin hauling generator between lift stations 24/7, performing water shut offs due to leaks

- Swift 911 Notification - City-wide power outage
- Swift 911 Notification - Rollingwood and Austin lift stations inoperable, Restrict water usage
- Austin Issued Boil Water Notice
- Swift911 Notification - Issued Boil Water Notice city-wide per Austin Water
- Swift911 Notification – Solid Waste Update
- Swift Notification – continue to restrict water usage, low on diesel fuel for generators
- Secured sub-contractor to move the generator between lift stations
- Mayor signed Disaster Declaration
- Police and Public Works checking for leaks, performing water shut offs, performing elderly checks
- Many staff members at home without power/water

Thursday, February 18

- Swift 911 Notification - Warming center open 9:00-4:00
- Swift 911 Notification – Warming center update
- Assistant Chief Munoz secured meals for staff members assisting with response efforts
- Police and Public Works checking for leaks, performing water shut offs, performing elderly checks
- City Administrator Amber Lewis requested 6 Pallets of water through WebEOC
- Roads beginning to clear, freezing temperatures continued making travel hazardous

Friday, February 19

- Warming center open 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- Swift 911 Notification - Water and Power Update – many homes power restored, avoided lift station failure
- Public Works repaired a residential leak and began clearing branches and brush
- AWR Notified city of Boil Water Notice
- AWR resumed operations
- Began compiling outage addresses to continue reporting to Austin Energy, power restored to most – 42 homes still without power
- Swift 911 Notification - Power update, reminder warming center
- New City Council agenda posted including disaster declaration extension
- Police and Public Works checking for leaks, performing water shut offs, performing elderly checks

Saturday, February 20

- Swift – Lift stations fully operational, still conserve water, supply of water bottles at city hall, watch for leaks as pipes thaw, be mindful that Oak Wilt is still present.
- 7 homes still without power
- Warming center open 9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
- Power restored to all residents of Rollingwood by around noon
- Water Distribution with water donated by Westlake Fire Department

Sunday, February 21

- Meeting to discuss and plan for water distribution and logistics with Administration, Chief Brady, with Mayor Dyson, Council Member Amy Pattillo, and Commissioner Howard.
- Swift 911 Notification – Water Distribution
- 6 Pallets of water delivered to City Hall
- Water distribution to affected residents and upon request
- Boy Scouts distributed water at Oak Hill
- Gave some Pallets back to Westlake Fire Department to distribute to the community
- Established a non-potable resource for residents to obtain water for flushing toilets, etc.

Monday, February 22

- Swift 911 Notification - Still under Boil Water Notice, dumpsters had been ordered for the following Saturday

Tuesday, February 23

- Swift 911 Notification – Lifted Boil Water Notice

Wednesday, February 24

- Swift 911 Notification – not all trash picked up due to high volume of trash, report this to city hall, note that receptacles would be staged on Saturday

Saturday, February 27

- Swift 911 - Receptacles filled up quickly, swapped for empty receptacles

Monday, March 15

- Replaced receptacles at upper park

Departments/Response:

Police Department

The Police Department was the first department on the scene responding to this emergency event. They performed Elderly/wellness checks, dispatched public works, assisted with Public Works operations, secured food and water for staff on duty, managed the warming center, and made key contact with Austin Energy, arranged for fuel delivery, delivered and distributed water bottles.

Public Works

The Public Works Department responded to this crisis when AWR, the city's water operator, announced that they would not be responding during the winter weather. The Public Works department performed elderly/wellness checks, water shut offs, generator transportation between lift stations, supported the sub-contractor in lift station operations, delivered and distributed water bottles on a 24/7 schedule.

Administration/Public Information

Administration worked mostly from home during the Winter Weather event providing support in communication, ordering and coordinating necessary resources,

- Created and sent daily communications to Rollingwood's residents
- Contracted with sub-contractor to operate the lift stations and transport the generator when none of the city vehicles could do it
- Requested and secured 6 pallets of water through WebEOC – coordinated water for the Westlake FD and a delivery to western Travis County
- Made and updated lists of homes without power and worked closely with Austin Energy to expedite power restoration
- Searched for additional generators and diesel fuel
- Searched for tire chains
- Searched for source to pump down lift stations
- Coordinated a site visit to the lift stations from the City Engineer for precautionary measures in case of sewage spill
- Sought the advice of the City Attorney in shutting down the city's water supply
- Implemented City Hall as a warming and charging center
- Coordinated food and supplies for employees who were at City Hall
- Issued and rescinded city-wide boil water notice when it was time to do so
- Directed and coordinated staff response to emergencies
- Delivered water bottles and non-potable water to Rollingwood's vulnerable population and to those without water
- Assisted loading the fire department's trailer with 3 pallets of water to be delivered to the greater western Travis County area

Finance

In the aftermath of the winter weather event the Finance Department is collecting invoices for disaster related purchases and coding those to a winter storm line item. Overtime expenses occurred due to the storm are also being tracked separately and coded to a winter storm line item. This will make any future reimbursements easier.

Community Response

The citizens of Rollingwood stepped up and took care of each other and the staff when it was needed.

- Thom Farrell
- Roseann Ferraro
- Sivagami Natesan
- Jordan Scott
- Council Member Wendi Hundley
- Mayor Michael Dyson
- Councilmember Amy Pattillo
- Commissioner Howard
- Commissioner Alter
- Boy Scouts

Things That Worked:

Police Department

- Dispatching for Public Works
 - As residents were calling them for assistance, they alerted Public Works to where to go and the priority of response
 - Communicated and coordinated with public works very well
- The Police Department had established contacts over the years with surrounding businesses
 - Prior established relationships with local businesses were very helpful (Randall, Trader Joes, Chevron)
- Located and secured diesel fuel for generators powering the lift stations
- The Police Department
- Storm Preparation
 - Kept a car up the hill in case we could not get out of city hall
 - Kept a car de-iced in garage
 - Purchasing food ahead of time for officers/staff
 - Ensured all officers had winter gear, boots and raingear prior.
 - was well prepared for the extended hours at city hall and the emergency operations (food, clothing, experience, etc.)
 - Officers brought needed clothing equipment, bedding and hygiene supplies.
 - Council policy allowed for maintaining sufficient staff in Police Department
 - Secured motel room
- Tractor cleared driveway
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Carlos Lopez – Independent Contractor

- Very experienced with lift stations and Rollingwood water and wastewater as a whole
- Had a four wheel drive vehicle capable of towing generator on icy roads
- Had the necessary licenses to operate lift stations and supervise public works employees to do so.

Public Works

- Prompt response time and sense of urgency
- Knowledge and experience with water wastewater systems
- Communicated and Coordinated with police department and Administration well
- The ATV was the only city vehicle that could drive in the conditions - Kawasaki Mules never stuck or slip. Could travel the entire city

Administration

- Coordinated communication with staff and community
- Continuous community updates via website and Swift911
 - Warming Center
 - Water Distribution
 - Checking on elderly/ disabled residents
- Worked with Council Members and others to restore electricity to the community

Westlake Fire Department

- Fire Department staged here – better response

Community and Residents

- Citizen volunteers
 - Located and placed generators for elderly
 - Loaded and unloaded cases of water
 - Secured winter equipment (tire chains, etc.) for staff
 - Installed a windshield on the mule

Moving Forward/Areas to Improve:

Storm Preparation

- Staffing Needs
 - Determine what civilian staff is essential and ensure that they are present and ready.
 - Better messaging about family preparations to city staff
 - Properly winterize city hall, field house, and irrigation systems
 - Information to residents on properly insulating/ winterizing
 - Extra uniforms, socks and boot cleats
- Offer our assistance to homeowners in need ahead of time
 - Public Works/Police Department
 - Storm preparations
 - List of elderly/ disabled to contact first
- Prepare a storm prep checklist/procedure/EOP for infrastructure
- Prepare for all types of weather - not just snow/ice

Wastewater Infrastructure - Lift Stations

- Greatest problem during storm
- If we can eliminate the problems associated with them losing power/not being operational storm response will be more manageable and infinitely less stressful on staff and resources
- May eliminate the need to purchase excessive not need to spend a fortune on winter specific supplies
- All seven lift stations may not need their own generator, but the hard to get to ones definitely do
- Need for modernized technology/switchboards
- PW Licensing (See Training and Licensing section)
- Updated water/ waste water maps
 - Most urgently locating main shut-offs and which pipes they isolate

Water Infrastructure – Residential

- Have plumbing/water system repair supplies on hand
- Residential meter shut off valves – residents unable to shut off own meters
- PW Licensing (See Training and Licensing section)
- Updated water/ waste water maps
 - Most urgently locating main shut-offs and which pipes they isolate

City Hall Needs

- Cots/Bedding
- Shower facilities

- Full kitchen
- Proper shelter for residents in need
- Large bay and space for fire department/police car
- Generator to operate EOC out of City Hall
- MREs for food supply
- Bottled water supply

Resource Limitations

- More 4x4 and all-wheel drive vehicles in fleet – PD and PW
- Forks for tractor
- Chains for tires
- Space for Fuel Storage
- Portable air compressor
- Truck inverters
- Propane tanks
- Tarps
- Contact list

Training/Licensing Needs

- Internal communication among city staff (STAR requests)
- Updated first aid training since no or slow emergency response
- Public Works licensing to operate lift stations and water system – Can't rely on a third party