



City of Willow Park

After Action Report



Winter Weather Event Jan. 23-29

Summary: the City of Willow Park Emergency Management, Police Department, and Public Works teams reported minor to moderate impacts from the winter storm, with the biggest operational disruption being the closure of city hall due to road conditions.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAM:

Fire Marshal John Schneider

Interim City Manager Michelle Guelker

Public Information Officer Rose Hoffman

PUBLIC WORKS:

- Our public works team, led by Public Works Director Chase McBride, stayed on duty 24/7 during the duration of the storm. Crews reported one well and a pump room that froze but staff was able to keep water continuously flowing throughout the event. There were also a few calls from residents about frozen lines on their end, and public works provided guidance to those community members.
- During the deepest part of the freeze, crews maintained and prepared our equipment - including a backhoe, skid steer, and excavator - to try to clear the roads as quickly as possible once the precipitation passed. Crews began working on Sunday to treat roads and began clearing them Tuesday, working through Thursday on clearing. Crews reported the roads were extremely difficult to clear due to the thickness of the ice. Roads nearest emergency facilities were given top priority throughout the event.
- Kings Gate hill was closed as a precaution for the duration of the weather.
- There were no water or wastewater service interruptions to our customers during the event.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:

- The emergency management team, led by Fire Marshal John Schneider, began preparing a plan on 1/20. Lines of communication were established between our city and county emergency services departments.
- Fire Marshal Schneider and Public Information Officer Rose Hoffman both joined webinars with National Weather Service to monitor any changes in the forecast and communicate on preparing for the storm with our community.
- The Parker County Office of Emergency Management activated an Emergency Operations Center on Friday, 1/23.
- During the storm, Fire Marshal Schneider communicated regularly with the county to share our road, water, and wastewater conditions for the county's reports.
- PIO Hoffman provided communications support to the county and other local agencies as needed.

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POLICE:

- Chief Ray Lacy said no major accidents were reported during the emergency operations period.
- Patrol crews continued to cover the city 24/7 for the duration of the event.

COMMUNICATIONS:

- Posts to social media about weather preparation began on 1/20, emphasizing preparation for the weather and safety tips.
- The Winter Weather page on the website was activated 1/23.
- Regular updates were provided to the public via the website and our social media channels, including road conditions, city hall closures, and trash collection schedule changes.
- Daily updates were provided to the mayor and council internally.

Post incident analysis:

- *Outdated equipment in the Public Works Department hampered efforts at treating roads after the ice and snow - Director McBride recommends upgrading salting equipment.*
- *The city's crisis communications plan has not been updated since 2021 - PIO Hoffman recommends an update to the plan to prevent duplication of effort on future events.*

