

# MILFORD FIRE – RESCUE DEPARTMENT

ISO Class 1



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Firefighters request assistance from Citizens

The Milford Fire Department is requesting assistance from the Citizens of Milford in assuring quick and effective firefighting efforts and sustained public safety. There is no easy way to put it...we have a lot of snow on the ground and on our roofs and decks. Last night's 16" of snow coupled with the previous snow fall and now possibly another storm next week make potential for disastrous condition to occur.

Issue # 1 – Snow burying hydrants. The Milford Fire Department receives its water supply to fight a fire from one of the almost 2,000 fire hydrants on the side of the road. Water supply is critical in the firefighting effort and without it disastrous situations can occur. If firefighters have to locate and clear the snow from the fire hydrant, precious time is lost securing the water supply. The fire will double in size every thirty (30) seconds. The Milford Fire Department has taken a pro-active stance and has a policy for snow removal. On-duty Firefighting crews are out clearing snow from hydrants, three times a day for three hours at a time until all 2,000 hydrants have been accounted for. Even with this much time, this takes days to accomplish because of actual emergency responses that interrupt the shoveling. Please assist us, if you have a fire hydrants in front of your property, take the time and remove the snow from around it. Also, if you are plowing snow, be cautious of the fire hydrants and please do not place plowed snow in or around the fire hydrants.

Issue # 2 – Carbon Monoxide. The Milford Fire Department urges everyone to have at least one working smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector on every floor in your property. Batteries should be changed twice a year (change your clock, change your battery). Due to the heavy accumulation and drifting of

snow experienced in the State of Connecticut, citizens are being informed of a common problem found with furnaces and other heating systems in the storm's aftermath. The problem encountered by many homeowners occurs when snow blocks furnace and hot water heater fresh air intake and exhaust vents. This can cause improper combustion or venting within the furnace or, in some cases, can cause deadly Carbon Monoxide gas to accumulate inside the home. Newer heating systems are more vulnerable to these issues due to the location of these vents, which are installed much lower on the side wall of a home. Homeowners can take the following precautions to ensure their safety;

- Have a properly operating Carbon Monoxide detector
- Keep the fresh air intake and exhaust vent area free from snow or ice build-up
- Home owners can find the inlets and outlets of your furnace by looking at the heating equipment and following the intake back to where it penetrates the wall. Then check this area outside to ensure no snow is blocking the vents.

Citizens are also reminded to keep alert for symptoms of Carbon Monoxide exposure. Symptoms and effects vary between individuals, even at the same level of CO exposure, but people typically experience flu-like symptoms, including: dizziness, fatigue, weakness, headache or vomiting, trouble breathing, or confusion. If anyone suspects symptoms from Carbon Monoxide exposure they should evacuate the home and call 911. Fire Departments are equipped to check for this dangerous condition and can also provide you with assistance in keeping your home CO free.

Issue # 3 – Heavy Snow load on roofs and decks. Another 16" of snow adds a tremendous amount of weight to these roofs and decks and some of the roofs and decks may not be designed to carry these additional loads. We recommend that the snow be removed from roofs and decks, safely. If you have any concerns regarding your structure, please call 911 for us to investigate. If you think a collapse is imminent, evacuate all persons immediately. Especially if you hear signs such as snapping, breaking, bending or creaking and see cracked or distorted support members or sheetrock.

Remember, we have many days left until Spring arrives. If we all take our time and help each other out, we can enjoy the warmer weather as soon as it happens.

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