

## Bad Weather Basics

Greetings to you all in Sudden Valley! We had an early brush with snow this year and, given the rain and clouds, it looks like it's time to start thinking about some Bad Weather Basics. We wanted to be sure you're aware of how our snow/ice response works, cover some common information needs (school bus stop changes, etc.) and put out some generally helpful tips about how to handle the weather.

**SVCA Snow/Ice Response:** Security monitors the community roads for weather issues from 11pm-2:50am. By 2:50am, Security contacts staff if there is an accumulation of snow, a problem breaking on ice (we test in our vehicles by tapping our breaks) or downed trees/limbs that they cannot move. Staff work with Security to identify issues and determine if we should activate for a response. If activated, SVCA staff are en route to work by 3am and usually operational by 3:40am. During this time, staff coordinate locations of downed trees and snow/ice issues and respond based on the following protocol: total blockage of access to homes, two-lane blockage, single-lane blockage.

Our primary concern is clearing roads so that emergency traffic can get access. Our next greatest concern is to clear for all other traffic purposes. We had hoped to provide more timely information to you about downed trees via NextDoor, but businesses can't post to that site. So, for the most current information, please refer to the SVCA Announcements section (which automatically feeds to our Facebook page).

In the mornings, you may be tempted to call us to let us know there is snow or ice. While this may seem helpful, it can cause congestion in our communication systems. The best way you can help in bad weather:

Call Security to notify them of downed trees (360) 319-8200 and tell them:

- The address or nearest cross street
- If it's blocking two or one lane(s)

**School Bus Stops:** SVCA staff coordinate with Bellingham School District staff before 4am and generally, the School District has determined how it will respond and posted this information to their website by 6am. If Bellingham School District is delayed, but running normal routes, then the usual bus stops are used. If, however, the District is running on "Snow Routes," then all pickups for all grades in SVCA are at The Market. To learn if Snow Routes will be used for the day, please go to the Bellingham School District website or tune in local radio/television channels.

**Helpful Tips:** Ice and Snow, Take it Slow! Remember, SVCA does not offer tow service. Monitor The Weather Channel and local stations for Sudden Valley specific weather alerts. Stock up on basic supplies before any major storm. Only go out if you must. If you must drive, ensure you have checked your equipment and winterized – your vehicle should have chains or studded tires, be fully fueled, have functional wipers and all lights should be operational. If you must travel, it is essential that you give yourself a lot of extra time. Don't make any abrupt moves while driving...it takes us all longer to react and being cautious can mean the difference between a major accident and a fender-bender or close call. Know where the shut off valves are in your home (gas/water) and wrap external pipes so there is no freezing (can cause pipes to burst).