

SHELTER OPENED IN BACA COUNTY FOR STRANDED MOTORISTS

(SPRINGFIELD, COLORADO) The Baca County Division of Emergency Management has announced that a shelter will be established at the Methodist Church in Springfield for motorists stranded by today's highway closures and blizzard conditions. Amenities are currently limited to a place to sleep, water, and restrooms, but can be expanded if prolonged sheltering will be needed. Restaurants in the area are continuing to operate. All motel / hotel rooms in Springfield are full.

The church is located at 901 Colorado Street. To get to the church turn off of Main Street and go west one block to Colorado Street. The church can be contacted at 719-523-4425.

Hwy 160 Westbound closed and 287 at Lamar is Closed. Road conditions will worsen as the temperature drops for the evening. Travel in the area is not advised. At least nine inches of snow has fallen in the area since 3:00 a.m. today on top of a layer of ice from freezing rains yesterday, making all travel extremely hazardous. Conditions should be considered life-threatening, and similar conditions in past storms have lead to deaths. Blizzard-like conditions are expected to continue in to Thursday.

Motorists who become stranded before reaching shelter should NOT leave their vehicles. Run the motor for 10 minutes per hour to keep warm, and make certain the exhaust pipes are kept clear. Due to conditions, receiving assistance may take some time, but the safest course of action will be staying in your vehicle.

Governor Bill Owens has declared a state-wide disaster due to the ongoing blizzard conditions. The Governor's declaration will free up additional resources to help fight the worsening weather.

General information about emergency services is available from the Baca County Division of Emergency Management, 719-523-6796, or the Baca County Sheriff's Office, 719-523-4511. For immediate emergencies, dial 911.

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