



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Feb. 23, 2019

Contact: Lori Latham/Joel Roon
PH: (616) 401-1743/ (616) 292-3280
EM: lori.latham@kentcountymi.gov/joel.roon@kentcounty.mi.gov

Winter Storm Alert: “Bomb cyclone” will bring high winds, blowing snow
Residents Are Urged to Prepare for Potential Power Outages

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (Feb. 23, 2019) – The Kent County Emergency Management, along with the National Weather Service and local response agencies, are monitoring a significant weather event that is expected to begin during the early morning hours of Sunday, February 23, 2019.

According to the National Weather Service, the surrounding area could experience damaging wind gusts at 60 mph or higher. Travel is expected to be potentially dangerous, especially near trees, limbs and other overhead hazards.

Due to the high winds associated with this weather storm, it is important for residents to understand the warning sirens located throughout the County, often incorrectly referred to as tornado sirens, serve a broader purpose. By policy, sustained winds (*not gusts*) determined by the National Weather Service of 70 mph or greater will prompt the activation of the County’s warning sirens. While this event likely will not call for siren activation, it is important for residents to understand the sirens are also used to warn of sustained high winds.

The Kent County Emergency Management is advising residents to prepare for this winter storm, categorized as a bomb cyclone, by:

- securing any outdoor items that could be impacted by the wind,
- charging all cellphones, laptops and other devices that use rechargeable batteries,
- preparing an emergency kit with basic resources such as water, food, prescribed medication, flashlight, warm clothes and blankets, etc., and
- forging any unnecessary travel.

Lastly, this storm is expected to lead to power outages. Residents are reminded to stay at least 20-25 feet away from downed power lines and to call 911 to report any downed lines.

###