

# Charter Township of Oakland Fire Department

Paul Strelchuk, Fire Chief

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Manager Stuart,

March 13, 2017

This is a synopsis of the worst storm in DTE's history and how it affected the Oakland Township Fire Department and our community. From the onset of the storm on Wednesday March 8 until the end of the day on Friday March 10<sup>th</sup> the Oakland Township fire Department responded to 27 calls. Of these calls, we had downed trees with roads closed, downed power lines, medical emergencies and car accidents. We had Orion Road closed between Snell and Silver Bell for approximately 12 hours on Wednesday, March 8 due to primary 40 KVM main transmission lines being down. Our crews did an excellent job of protecting our citizens, keeping our roads open, as well as working alongside our Oakland County Sheriff units, this teamwork was seamless. In my 35+ years of working in the fire service and being involved with large storms, I would like to complement DTE for having over 800K people without power and doing an excellent job of getting so many people's power back in such a short period of time.

As Emergency Manager for Oakland Township I was monitoring the situation from start to finish. At the beginning of the storm most of the Township was without power including our trailer park off a 32 Mile. On Thursday March 9, I started to work with Rochester City FD and Rochester Hills FD in coordinating the opening of warming centers for all our residents. To the best of my knowledge, in my 21+ years of working for Oakland Township this type of action has never been taken. The three communities issued a press release and opened a warming center at Hart middle school off Sheldon Road for Thursday night and Friday night, in this time we had five people spend the night over the two days, one of which was on a ventilator. When the warming center was open, the three departments provided manpower to staff the facility. DTE had offered to provide beds, blankets, water and some food for the warming center – The Salvation Army was also on standby to provide for the remaining needs of the citizens. The warming center was able to be closed by Saturday afternoon thanks to quick power restoration for those who were utilizing the center.

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We were fortunate in Oakland Township that some of my key concern areas had their power restored by Thursday afternoon. I did have two additional warming centers identified within the Township if needed. One of which was fire station number two on Rochester Road and the second was the community house at Woodland Estates trailer park off 32 Mile. I worked with the owner, Mark Arney of Woodland estates trailer park to establish his community house as a warming center, his cooperation was second to none. Station number two was also utilized by many residents as a water distribution point for those without water. Residents with horses and other animals filled large tanks and made several trips over several days in order to keep their animals healthy.

I would especially like to thank all our Oakland Township fire fighters for doing such a great job. Roads were open almost as fast as they were closed due to trees down. "WE HAVE A GREAT TEAM"

Thank you,

Paul P Strelchuk, Fire Chief, EM