

## **Commissioner Questions March 18, 2015 - Winter Weather Part 2**

### **Q. What did the county do extra the night of the big snow?**

A. Out of an abundance of caution, not knowing if the heavy wet snow would overload trees and cause power lines to come tumbling down, we stationed firemen throughout the county so that if there were emergencies, someone would be close by to assist regardless of road condition. Fortunately they were not needed, but available. Thanks to Fire Chief David Dyer for setting this operation up in case needed. The E-911 Center also had to be prepared for a possible power outage. Any time we have the threat of severe cold and the possibility of a power outage at the same time, it is serious to all public safety and volunteer personnel.

### **Q. We heard that you used outside private contractors to supplement the normal snow removal crew. Why was that done?**

A. Again, we were being prepared for the maximum storm forecast. Anytime we are concerned about unusually deep snow on our roads, we plan for, and utilize private contractors to supplement our road crews. This allowed us to get so many more roads completed in a shorter amount of time since we had 7 motor graders scattered throughout the county, in addition to our nine salt trucks. If we had received the possible predicted 8" to 10" snowfall, and had difficulty getting over our roads due to fallen trees and power lines, having motor graders and chainsaws stationed throughout the county certainly gave us a better sense of security. Thanks to these contractors who provided an excellent service to our citizens.

### **Q We see a lot of thin cracks and bumps in some of the paved roads now. What is this and will it go away?**

A. Unfortunately, with a severe winter like we have had in February and part of March, especially with the constant freezing and warming of our paved roads, these long cracks appear in the pavement running from side to side. We hope that most of these cracks and small bumps will pack down with the traffic flow and warmer weather, but there is no question that this winter has and will have a serious impact on our roads for some time to come.

### **Q. Our county gravel road is a mess and we want it fixed right now.**

A. Unfortunately, this is one of the first questions I received this week after the snow. If you do live on a county gravel road, it is going to be a little mushy because the roads have been frozen and thawed time after time. If you then add a layer of snow on top, which soaks into the road surface as it melts, you will often have an inch or so of soft dirt or mud on the surface. As the rain stops and traffic packs down the road surface, in most cases the gravel roads will start to harden back up and may even get smoother than before.

**Q. Why can't the county just grade and put new gravel on our county gravel road now?**

A. The ground is simply too soft to put a motor grader on these roads. There will also be some small potholes develop that may appear on some parts of roads, especially where the road is fairly flat and level. For those spots that do not clear up, let the Road Dept. know, and they may need to put some gravel on them when they harden and dry some. Just remember that gravel is delivered with a big truck and this time of year, the truck can do more harm than good. Be patient. All our gravel roads have thick bases and while they may be a little soft right now, they will improve. If not, you can call the Road Dept. at 706-439-6062 for assistance. Thanks for your patience throughout the winter weather conditions.

Lamar Paris, Commissioner