

## **City Responds to Severe High-Wind Event**



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **CITY RESPONDS TO SEVERE HIGH-WIND EVENT**

**GREAT FALLS, Montana** –The City of Great Falls experienced a severe high-wind weather event on Tuesday, August 14 beginning at 8 p.m. lasting until approximately 11:30 p.m. The damaging winds resulted in numerous downed power lines and trees and power outages throughout the community. Calls flooded into the 911 Center and the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated. Additional off duty City staff was brought in to support the incident.

During the high-wind incident the City's 911-Dispatch Center handled 157 incoming calls for service. An additional dispatcher was utilized during the incident to help with the increased call volume. Over the course of the evening there were several times when all nine, 911 lines were busy.

The City's EOC serves as a central command and control facility responsible for carrying out emergency preparedness, emergency management or disaster management. During this event, the EOC was activated to assist the Incident Commanders and to coordinate City resources. Staff in the EOC included the City Manager, Deputy City Manager, Fire Chief, Police Chief, Police Captain, Emergency Manager and 911 Communications Manager. In addition to the Police and Fire Departments, Park and Recreation Forestry Division and the Public Works staff were brought in to help manage the incident.

According to City Manager Greg Doyon, "Our 911 dispatchers always demonstrate a high level of professionalism and remain calm under pressure, tonight was no exception. I was impressed with how all of our staff involved in the incident, including – Fire, Police, Forestry and Public Works staff responded in the face of an emergency."

The City is continuing to evaluate the impact of the weather event and will be completing a damage assessment throughout the community. Citizens are encouraged to utilize 911 for emergencies only. Power outages are not considered an emergency unless they pose a health or safety risk. Citizens that identify downed power lines or trees in the boulevard or streets should contact the Police non-emergency number at 771-1180. The City would like to remind residents to stay away from all downed electrical wires and power lines. All downed electrical lines should be considered dangerous.

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As a safety reminder, residents are encouraged to have a weather radio on hand during similar weather incidents to stay informed of emergency and safety alerts. For additional information regarding the severe high-wind event contact Fire Chief McCamley at 727-8070.

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