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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS  
BUREAU OF FIRE SERVICES  
RICHARD W. MILLER  
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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DIRECTOR

February 6, 2014

Dear Chief,

Because there is a lot more winter ahead of us, I want to issue this friendly reminder about the importance of keeping areas around fire hydrants clear of snow and ice.

As you are well aware, fire hydrants can quickly “disappear” becoming completely buried after a heavy snowfall, subsequent street snowplowing and from those who irresponsibly pile snow from individual driveways and parking lots onto areas where there are hydrants.

You also know all too well of the precious time that is lost having to first locate and then dig out fire hydrants to establish a water supply. That can be catastrophic in a fire emergency.

In our Fire Prevention Code Rules we adopt the 2006 Edition of NFPA 1.

- Section 13.1.3 of NFPA 1, 2006 states, “Obstructions shall not be placed or kept near fire hydrants, fire department inlet connections, or fire protection system control valves in a manner that would prevent such equipment or fire hydrants from being immediately visible and accessible.”
- Section 18.3.4 of NFPA 1, 2006 states, “Fire hydrants and connections to other approved water supplies shall be accessible to the fire department.”

Annex J which is not part of the Fire Prevention Code Rules but is included for informational purposes states in Section J.7.2.2, Hydrants and all fire-fighting equipment should be accessible for use at all times. No temporary storage should be allowed to obstruct access to fire-fighting equipment, and any accumulation of snow or obstructing material should be removed promptly.

I urge you to assess and ensure the accessibility of all fire hydrants located within your jurisdiction. Encourage business owners and residents who work and live in your community to help take responsibility of keeping snow away from hydrants to allow for easy access when you need them.

We all win when working together to maintain our fire hydrants, a valuable and potentially life-saving service.

Thank you for your cooperation. Stay safe out there.

Sincerely,

Richard Miller  
State Fire Marshal