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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Subject: Winter Snow Storm Toby Activity / Electrical Safety Tips

Contact: John A. Sahatjian Fire Chief

“Winter Storm Toby”

Winter storm “Toby” dumped nearly one foot of snow in our area on Wednesday into Thursday. This snow storm was especially damaging due to the heavy wet snow weighing on the trees and power lines.

Our Dedicated Volunteer members from South Wall Fire Rescue manned the station starting at about 5pm on Wednesday answering emergency calls through 4pm on Thursday. In total members answered over 35 emergency calls for service including power lines down, trees on power lines, motor vehicle accidents and one building collapse.

The building collapse located at 2414 Hwy 34 (pictured below) was dispatched as a reported fire alarm at approximately 4am. Members quickly arrived discovered the rear shingled overhang had collapse off of the rear of the building. During the collapse the debris broke sprinkler lines, damaged and exposed electrical panels and severed the gas mains going into the building.

The area was closed off including Route 34 was shut down for a short period of time with the help of Wall Twp Police, until NJNG could respond and shut the gas off to the building.

Members shut the water and power down the building to prevent any further damage, also inspected for any further structural compromise which it was negative. Wall Fire Marshals Office was also on scene. There were no injuries.

Thank to our well-trained personnel all of the calls were handled with out injuries to citizens or firefighters.

Below are some safety tips when dealing with electrical issues such as down power lines and generators during power outages.

ELECTRICAL SAFETY

- Contact 9-1-1 immediately to report downed power lines outside your home.
- Always assume fallen power lines are energized. Stay a minimum of ten feet away from a downed power line and any nearby objects it may be touching, such as a fence or tree limb.
- Never touch a person who is in contact with a downed power line. Call 9-1-1 immediately.
- If you see a downed power line, move away and anything touching it. The ground around power lines – up to 35 feet away – may be energized.
- Do not drive over downed power lines.
- If your car comes in contact with a downed power line while you are inside, stay in the car
- If you must leave your car because it's on fire, jump out of the vehicle with both feet together and avoid contact with both the car and the ground at the same time.

GENERATOR SAFETY TIPS

- Never run a generator in an enclosed space or indoors.
- Engines emit carbon monoxide. Be sure to have a working CO alarm in the home while running the generator.
- Don't run a portable generator in the rain unless you cover and vent it.
- Before refueling, turn off a gasoline-powered generator and let it cool.
- Store extra gasoline properly, be sure to store it in an ANSI – approved container in a cool, well ventilated place.
- Avoid electrical hazards, by using a transfer switch wired by a certified electrician.
- Don't attempt to back feed your house. Back feeding means trying to power your homes wiring by plugging the generator into a wall outlet. **This is very dangerous.**

