

Emergency declared following two serious MVC's

Dufferin County as of 12:45 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 29, has taken the unusual for Dufferin step of declaring a State of Emergency for all of the county.

Wednesday had presented at least two near tragedies on county roads in white out conditions, prior to the emergency declaration.

In the first incident, at about 9:45 a.m. an Orangeville Fire Department vehicle was returning from assistance with one motor vehicle accident near Laurel when it was in a head-on collision with a motor vehicle on County Road 12.

While both vehicles were stopped following the collision, a third vehicle collided with the first one that had collided with the fire truck. As a result, the driver of the first vehicle had to be extricated from his car. Fire Chief Andy Macintosh said the driver was sent to hospital with life-threatening injuries.

The chief said he wasn't certain whether or not CR 12 had been closed prior to the collisions.

In the second incident, a female OPP officer is in hospital with serious but non-life-threatening injuries following a collision on CR 109 near Waldemar.

OPP Constable Paul Nancekivel said the officer was investigating a tractor trailer at about noon, and was in her cruiser calling for assistance when she was struck from behind by a second tractor trailer.

He said Grand Valley District Fire Department used Jaws of Life to extricate the officer from her cruiser. She was transported to a hospital, which he didn't specify, with serious injuries and is apparently in stable condition.

County Clerk Pam Hillock at about 1:50 came briefly out of a conference call to advise that the Public Works crews were just about worn out after almost a full week of unrelenting whiteouts, roads closures, motor vehicle collisions and other emergencies.

She said the county was seeking assistance from the municipalities as well as neighbouring counties and the province.

Among the lower tier, Orangeville Mayor Rob Adams said in a Facebook posting that "residents are encouraged to stay off the roads if at all possible due to blowing snow and poor visibility.

"The Warden of Dufferin County, Bill Hill, just spoke with me regarding the State of Emergency and I wish to assure residents that the Town of Orangeville has and continues to work cooperatively with the Dufferin County Emergency Management team to assist in any way possible."

Ms. Hillock said there will be regular updates on the county website and also in the social media.

By Wes Keller