

January 17, 2019

## News Release

### **Keep Fire Hydrants and Address Markers Clear of Snow and Ice**

News release prepared by:  
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As winter sets in around western Montana, Missoula Rural Fire District (MRFD) would like to ask for the public's help with keeping address signs and fire hydrants clear of snow. Before you start shoveling or pushing snow, think about where it's going. In the event of a fire emergency, can firefighters find the hydrant near your home? Can they see your address marker? Many fire hydrants and address signs get buried during even minor winter storms.

Finding the closest fire hydrant and being able to connect fire hoses is critical during a fire. Fire hydrants supply the water necessary to extinguish fires in homes and businesses, and if one cannot be located and accessed for use, it could delay ...putting out the fire. Even in rural areas, water tenders will drive to the nearest fire hydrant to fill up and then deliver water to the fire scene. If the closest hydrants cannot be located, it can cause delays, jeopardizing life and property.

Clear the area on the street side of the hydrant all the way to the street and clear a three-foot area around the rest of the hydrant so that firefighters can find it and access it easily. The few minutes that it takes to do this could truly make the difference between life and death.

Also, make sure that address markers and signs are clearly visible from the street. When clearing a driveway, it can be easy to pile snow in front of an address marker or sign, especially at the end of a long driveway. If you use a snow blower, make sure that the snow is not thrown in the direction of your address marker as it can stick very easily. If snow does stick to your address marker, remove it right away.

Please help us to help you, by keeping fire hydrants clear and address markers unobstructed.

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For more information on this important topic, please call MRFD at 406-549-6172.