

Facilities & Safety Report

Board of Directors Meeting: March 9, 2023

DS ELEMS

I'm combining a couple of reports here due to the massive overlap in what needs to be covered. In short, things are for the moment still cold and wet; only to get much wetter. At the moment I believe it's raining in Portola, with the worst of it queuing up to hit in probably the next two or three hours. Conditions when I left this afternoon at approximately 1pm were still pretty mild with the storm just starting to bring some light snow flurries far to the west. I'd like to stress that with the current conditions and those expected, that for at least the next five days museum visits be limited to only those essential personnel performing facilities maintenance and persons/staff with immediate or pressing business.

The snow ranges from four inches to about four feet depending on how much sun certain areas get, with wind blown drifts three to five feet. Areas we've piled snow while clearing out the site range from two to six feet deep, and the north side of the shop where the snow had slid off the roof is about five feet. The snow on the north side roofs are two to five feet deep, with the lean-to have four to ten inches of ice under all the snow. The areas we've managed to keep cleared had developed into narrow trenches through the snow, with warmer weather filling such areas with concrete in with snow melt that would freeze to fairly thick sheet ice overnight.

To that end, conditions on site are considered substantially unsafe for most persons to try and visit/access the museum. The snow and ice will obviously present major slipping and fall hazards. The deep snow presents issues with getting around, posing a danger to both people and vehicles becoming stranded. With how deep the snow is in many places there is a real danger of person becoming fatigued particularly if one were to fall through the deepest areas and run into issues climbing clear. I strongly recommend that non-essential personnel not visit until conditions improve.

Currently there is practically no parking on site for more than one vehicle, two if there is some coordination and creativity between the drivers. Parking outside the gate is not an option, as the city and Union Pacific actively drive their loaders through that area to get around while clearing things out. As this current storm system blows through things are likely to melt out quite a bit, but the issue of snow will be replaced with deep mud and slush. If you have no immediate business at the museum, it is advised that you wait until conditions improve.

As the warm weather and rain over the next week or so melts off the snow, the massive build up on the north shop roofs will present an extreme hazard. With the ice and now rain saturated snow sliding off, even the smallest sections will weigh in a few hundred pounds, and have the likelihood of coming down in large swaths. Even in milder springs for such section to be up to or exceed ten feet wide and up to as many feet in depth.

Flooding over the next week is likely to be significant, and almost guaranteed along the north side of the shop. Currently there is standing water on the floors of the electrical supply room, display room and company store. The sand bagging of the doors to the back of the store and the boardroom hallway have so far worked well. I added some expanding spray foam to the hallway door to help with what I expect to be significantly deep snow melt and ice damming. Additionally, I sealed up the north door of the Ops Office which is currently inaccessible from the outside (five feet of snow), and the south shop door the leads to the loading platform. While I don't expect the foam to be 100% effective it should hopefully hold back the worst of the snow melt.