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BARRAGA: NEWS FROM THE 11TH DISTRICT

BARRAGA: REMINDER TO SHOVEL SIDEWALKS IN FRONT OF HOMES AND BUSINESSES

Suffolk County Legislator Tom Barraga (R-West Islip) would like to take this opportunity to remind homeowners and businesses with sidewalks to shovel the snow from the walks as soon as possible after a snow fall in order to avoid the possibility of pedestrian injury and possible civil suit against the homeowner or business.

Reminders and Tips When Shoveling and Using the Snowblower:

Dress Appropriately- Light, layered, water-repellent clothing provides both ventilation and insulation. It is also important to wear the appropriate head covering and thick, warm socks. Choose gloves or mittens that will keep your hands warm, dry, and blister free. Avoid falls by wearing shoes or boots that have slip-resistant soles.

Check with your doctor if you have any medical problems- Clearing snow places a great deal of stress on the heart – so if you have a medical condition or do not exercise regularly, you should speak with your doctor before shoveling or snow blowing. You may also wish to consider hiring someone to remove the snow, rather than doing it yourself.

Proper lifting- Try and push the snow instead of lifting it. If you must lift, do it properly. Squat with your legs apart, knees bent, and back straight. Lift with your legs. Do not bend at the waist.

Proper supervision – Do not leave the snowblower unattended when it is running. Shut off the engine if you must walk away from the machine.

Use the pull-cord safety – To start a machine with a pull-cord, hold the cord firmly and stand with feet wide apart in a broad stance. If the cord does not move freely, do not force it. Sharply pulling a nonmoving pull-cord may cause an injury to the upper body or back.

Keep children away – Never let children operate snow blowers. Keep children 15 years of age and younger away when snow blowers are in use.

Understand your machine – Read the instruction manual prior to using a snowblower. Be familiar with the specific safety hazards and unfamiliar features. Do not attempt to repair or maintain the snow blower without reading the instruction manual.

In addition, be mindful of cars and individuals walking in streets and in parking lots especially when navigating around the big snow piles that have accumulated due to plowing.

“ A number of constituents have contacted my office to complain that homes and businesses that have sidewalks are not clearing the walks after a snow storm thus forcing adults and children to walk in the street. You have an obligation to clean your sidewalks after a snow storm and you should do so as quickly as possible” said Barraga.”