
Two Boys Trapped for Hours in a Snow Mound Are Rescued

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Two boys in upstate New York were trapped under a 7-foot mound of snow for more than four hours before they were freed early Thursday by rescue workers and relatives who dug with their hands and shovels, the police said.

The boys, ages 9 and 11, had been playing in snow that had piled up in a parking lot opposite the apartment complex where they were staying Wednesday evening in Newburgh, about 60 miles north of New York City in Orange County. While details remained sketchy Thursday night, Sgt. Aaron Weaver of the Newburgh Police Department said the boys might have become trapped when a snowplow clearing the parking lot pushed the snow on top of them.

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The boys and the plow were on opposite sides of a snow mound, so it is likely that the plow's operator did not see them, the police said.

The boys missed their 10 p.m. curfew, Weaver said, and after checking around the neighborhood, their parents called the police just before midnight.

Brandon Rola, a police officer canvassing the area, found the boys around 2 a.m. when he noticed a shovel jutting out of a mound of snow. The officer began digging with the shovel and was joined by other officers, an ambulance crew and relatives who dug with their hands, Weaver said.

A passer-by who stopped to see what was going on offered several shovels from the back of his pickup truck. It took 17 people and 15 minutes to dig out the boys, Weaver said.

"We had to move quickly because there was a risk with the elements and the pressure that they were getting very little oxygen," he said.

The boys, whose names were not released, were alert and talkative when they were found. They showed no signs of injury, but complained of being cold and having difficulty moving, Weaver said.

They were taken to a hospital for treatment, and one was transferred to a regional hospital for further observation.

The Hudson Valley had been hit hard by a snowstorm Wednesday that blanketed much of the Northeast and knocked out power to thousands. The utility provider Central Hudson said that at its peak, about 45,000 customers had lost electricity during the storm and that service had been restored to more than half of them by late Thursday afternoon. Repairs were expected to last through the weekend.
