

Public Service Announcement



Winter Weather Safety

Provided by your

Local Emergency Management Office

Winter Weather Safety Tips

Everyone is potentially at risk during winter storms. Most fatalities are indirectly related to the storm. People die from traffic accidents on icy roads, heart attacks while shoveling snow, and hypothermia from prolonged exposure to cold and unsafe residential conditions.

Be prepared for winter weather! Listen to NOAA weather radio or commercial radio/television to stay informed about winter storm watches, warnings and advisories.

At **home and work**, plan ahead for winter storms by having these on hand:

- **Flashlight** and extra **batteries**
- Battery-backup powered **NOAA weather Radio**
- **AM/FM Radio**
- **Extra food and water** - high energy food such as dried fruit, nuts and granola bars, and food requiring no cooking or refrigeration
- **Can opener**
- **Extra medicine** and **baby supplies**
- **First aid kit**
- **Heating fuel**
- **Emergency heat source**
- **Fire extinguisher**
- **Smoke alarm**
- Make sure **pets** have plenty of food, water, and shelter

If you are already **indoor** during hazardous winter weather:

- **Stay inside!**
- When using alternate heat from a fireplace, wood stove, space heater, etc., **use fire safeguards and properly ventilate**
- **Close off** unneeded rooms
- **Stuff** towels or rags in **cracks** under doors
- **Cover windows** at night
- **Eat and drink** - food provides the body with energy for producing its own heat
- **Wear layers** of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing

The best advice for traveling during forecasted winter conditions is; "simply stay at home". Only travel if necessary. However, if you must:

Before starting out in a vehicle:

- **Plan your travel**
- **Check the weather**
- Have **road condition phone numbers** handy
- Carry a **Winter Storm Survival Kit**
- Keep the **gas tank near full** to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines
- **Avoid traveling alone**
- **Let someone know** your timetable and route

If you are **stranded in your vehicle** during hazardous winter weather:

- **Stay** with your vehicle
- **Take turns** sleeping
- **Run the motor** every hour for 10 minutes to keep warm
- **Keep windows open a little** to prevent carbon monoxide buildup
- Make sure the **exhaust pipe is not blocked**
- **Tie a bright cloth** to the antenna
- **Exercise periodically** by vigorously moving your arms, legs, toes and fingers
- **Turn on the dome light** while the engine is running to aid rescuers at night
- After the snow stops falling, **raise the car hood** to indicate you need help

A good automobile **Winter Safety Kit** includes: cell phone and charger, blankets or sleeping bags, flashlight and extra batteries, first-aid kit, knife, whistle, high-calorie non-perishable food, bottled water, extra clothing to keep dry, large empty can to use as emergency toilet, tissues and paper towels, small can and waterproof matches to melt snow for drinking water, sack of sand or cat litter for traction, shovel, windshield scraper and brush, tool kit, tow rope, battery booster cables, water container, compass and road maps. If stranded, a deck of cards can help keep both children and adults occupied until help arrives. Most of these items can be stored in a duffle bag and placed in the vehicle's trunk.

Dress for the storm if you must be outdoors during severe winter weather:

- Wear **loose, lightweight, warm clothes in layers**
- Remove layers to **avoid perspiration** and subsequent chill
- **Outer garments** should be tightly woven, water repellent, and hooded.
- **Wear a hat** --half your body heat loss can be from the head.
- **Cover your mouth** to protect your lungs from extreme cold.
- **Mittens**, snug at the wrist, are better than gloves.
- Try to **stay dry**

If you are **caught outdoors** during hazardous winter weather:

- **DO NOT PANIC**
- **Find shelter**
- Try to **stay dry**
- **Cover** all exposed body parts
- **Build shelter:** a lean-to, windbreak or snow cave for protection from the wind
- **Build a fire** for heat and to attract attention
- Place **rocks** around fire to absorb and reflect heat
- **Melt snow** for drinking water -- eating snow will lower your body temperature
- **Avoid overexertion** - especially when shoveling or freeing stuck vehicles
- **Experts suggest** staying put and allow rescuers to locate you.

STAY SAFE: Being prepared for winter weather (just like all weather) starts at home.
"BE AWARE – BE PREPARED".