



Winter Safety Tips

PREPARING FOR A WINTER STORM

At home:

- Keep handy a battery-powered flashlight, NOAA weather radio and portable radio, extra food (canned or dried food is best), can opener, and bottled water (at least 3 gallons per person).
- Make sure each member of household has a warm coat, gloves, hat and water-resistant boots.
- Ensure that extra blankets and heavy clothes are available.
- Keep on hand items for infant, elderly or disabled family members.
- Be aware of potential fire and carbon monoxide hazards if you plan to use an emergency heating source such as a fireplace, wood stove or space heater.

In a vehicle:

- Ensure the vehicle is winterized by late fall. Keep the gas tank close to full.
- Have the following emergency supplies in your auto: shovel, blankets, windshield scraper, container of sand, battery booster cables, tow chain or rope, flashlight, battery-operated radio, first-aid kit and high energy snacks (e.g. nuts, raisins).
- If travel is necessary, let someone know your destination and arrival time. Take along a cell-phone in case you must call for help.

Outside:

- Avoid overexertion, such as shoveling heavy snow, pushing a car, or walking in deep snow. Sweating could lead to chill and hypothermia.
- Walk carefully on snowy, icy sidewalks.
- Wear loose-fitting, lightweight warm clothing in layers. Wear wool hat and mittens.
- Keep your clothes dry. Change wet socks and clothing quickly to prevent loss of body heat.
- Understand the hazards of wind chill. As wind speed increases, heat is carried away from a person's body more rapidly.

DURING A WINTER STORM

At home:

- To save heat, close off unneeded rooms, cover windows at night and stuff towels or rags in cracks under doors.
- Maintain adequate food and water intake. Food provides the body with energy for producing its own heat.

If stranded in a vehicle:

- Attach a bright cloth to your antenna to attract attention and then remain in the vehicle.
- Run the motor about 10 minutes each hour for heat. However, open the window slightly for fresh air and make sure that the exhaust pipe isn't blocked.
- Get attention by turning on the dome light and emergency flashers when running the engine.
- Exercise by moving arms, legs, fingers and toes to keep blood circulating and to keep warm.

If stranded outside:

- Try to stay dry and cover all exposed parts of the body.
- Prepare a windbreak or snow cave for protection from the wind. Build a fire for heat and to attract attention.
- Do not eat snow. It will lower your body temperature. Melt it first.

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ANYTIME

Listen for All-Hazards NOAA Weather Radio or local radio, television and cable stations for the latest updates on hazardous winter weather.

- To ensure a continuous flow of weather information, make sure the NOAA Weather Radio, or another radio or television has a battery backup.
- For All-Hazards NOAA Weather Radio information, including a station near you, see the NOAA Weather Radio page on the Internet at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr> or contact your National Weather Service office.

Know the difference between a winter storm WATCH (conditions make the storm possible) and winter storm WARNING (the storm is headed for your area).

A blizzard WARNING means strong winds, blinding wind-driven snow, and dangerous wind chill. Avoid driving and seek shelter.

For more information on winter storms, see <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/brochures/winterstorm.pdf>.