Winter Weather Preparedness Tips

Know Your Winter Storm & Extreme Cold Terms

Familiarize yourself with these terms to help identify a winter storm hazard:
- **Freezing Rain**
  Rain that freezes when it hits the ground, creating a coating of ice on roads, walkways, trees, and power lines.
- **Sleet**
  Rain that turns to ice pellets before reaching the ground. Sleet also causes moisture on roads to freeze and become slippery.
- **Winter Storm Watch**
  A winter storm is possible in your area.
- **Winter Storm Warning**
  A winter storm is occurring or will soon occur in your area.
- **Blizzard Warning**
  Sustained winds of frequent gusts to 35 miles per hour or greater and considerable amounts of falling or blowing snow (reducing visibility to less than a quarter mile) are expected to prevail for a period of three hours or longer.
- **Frost/Freeze Warning**
  Below freezing temperatures are expected.

Frequently check the local weather reports via:
- National Weather Service forecast reports - [www.crhn.mn.gov/oax](http://www.crhn.mn.gov/oax)
- Local News stations or radio

Home Weather Preparedness

Take these steps to prepare your home to stay safe and warm during the winter months.
- **Winterize your home.**
  - Install weather stripping, insulation, storm windows.
  - Insulate water lines that run along exterior walls.
  - Clean out gutters and repair roof leaks.

Check your heating systems:
- Have your heating system serviced professionally to make sure that it is clean, working properly and ventilated to the outside.
- Inspect and clean fireplaces and chimneys.
- Install a smoke detector. Test batteries monthly.
- Have a safe alternate heating source, alternate fuels available, and test them regularly.
- Prevent carbon monoxide (CO)
- Install a CO detector to alert you of the presence of the deadly, odorless, colorless gas.
- Learn symptoms of CO poisoning: headaches, nausea, and disorientation.

**House Equipment Safety Tips:**
- Keep grills and generators out of the house and garage.
- Position generators at least 20 feet from the house.

**Home Emergency Supply Kit**
- Enough Water for each person/pet for 3 days (1 gallon per person/day)
- Food that won’t spoil
- One complete change of clothing and footwear per person (think in layers for winter)
- Blanket or sleeping bag per person
- Extra batteries for each piece of equipment (try to use the same type/size batteries)
- Prescription Medications
- Battery powered NOAA All Hazards Alert Radio
- Flashlight with batteries
- Extra set of car keys
- Cash (the power may not be on for those ATMs, etc.) & credit card
- First Aid Kit
- Extra Cell Phone batteries or ways to change your cell phone
- Special items for those family members with special needs (diapers, denture crème, extra hearing aid batteries, contact solution, coloring books & colors, deck of playing cards, etc.)

For Pets- Leash, collar, favorite toy, kennel or other way to secure pet, food & water, treats, photo (for proof of ownership or in case they become separated from you for identification).

**Car Emergency Supply Kit**
- Winter coat, hat, and gloves; ideally a blanket (or more than one) as well
- First aid kit
- Some non-perishable food such as granola bars, crackers; even just some hard candy can help
- Strike anywhere matches in a water tight container
- Candles and empty coffee can to melt snow; a cup is good idea as well
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Small tool kit or at least an all-purpose tool
- Jumper cables
- Tire chains
- Shovel
- Kitty litter or carpet strips for getting traction

Remember not to eat snow- it will lower your internal body temperature

If running your car to stay warm- always be sure the tail pipe is clear of snow

Always stay with your car, don’t walk in a blizzard, excessive cold or unknown area

For More Ideas or Information:
- [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

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