

Winter Preparedness

Winter Storms deceptive killers since most of the deaths that occur are indirectly related to the actual storm.

- People die in traffic accidents on icy roads
- People die of heart attacks while shoveling snow
- People die of hypothermia from prolonged exposure to the cold

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR WINTER?

Winter Weather Terminology

Monitor weather reports so that adequate preparation can be made to lessen the impact of severe weather conditions. Some terms you should understand are:

Freezing Rain or Freezing Drizzle indicates rain that freezes as it strikes the ground and other surfaces forming a coating of ice.

Sleet indicates small particles of ice, usually mixed with rain. If enough sleet accumulates on the ground, it will make travel hazardous.

Snow, when used without a qualifying word such as occasional or intermittent, indicates that the snowfall will be steady and probably continue for several hours.

Snow Flurries indicates periods of snow falling for short durations at intermittent periods. Accumulations are generally small.

Wind Chill based on the rate of heat loss from exposed skin caused by combined effects of wind and cold. As the wind increases, heat is carried away from the body at an accelerated rate, driving down the body temperature. (See chart below)

Wind Speed (mph)	Temperature (F)											
	35	30	25	20	15	10	5	0	-5	-10	-15	-20
5	32	27	22	16	11	6	0	-5	-10	-15	-21	-26
10	22	16	10	3	-3	-9	-15	-22	-27	-34	-40	-46
15	16	9	2	-5	-11	-18	-25	-31	-38	-45	-51	-58
20	12	4	-3	-10	-17	-24	-31	-39	-46	-53	-60	-67
25	8	1	-7	-15	-22	-29	-36	-44	-51	-59	-66	-74
30	6	-2	-10	-18	-25	-33	-41	-49	-56	-64	-71	-79
35	4	-4	-12	-20	-27	-35	-43	-52	-58	-67	-74	-82
40	3	-5	-13	-21	-29	-37	-45	-53	-60	-69	-76	-84
45	2	-6	-14	-22	-30	-38	-46	-54	-62	-70	-78	-85

VERY COLD BITTER COLD EXTREME COLD

Winter Storm Watch indicates severe winter weather conditions may affect the area (freezing rain, sleet, or heavy snow may occur separately or in combination)

Winter Storm Warning indicates that severe winter weather conditions are imminent.

Cold Related Injuries

Frostbite

Damage to body tissue caused by that tissue being frozen.

Warning signs - a loss of feeling and a white or pale appearance in extremities, such as fingers, toes, ear lobes, or the tip of the nose. **If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately!**

- If you must wait for help, slowly re-warm affected areas.
- However, if the person is also showing signs of hypothermia, warm the body core before the extremities.

Hypothermia

Low Body Temperature

Warning signs - uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness, and apparent exhaustion.

Detection -Take the person's temperature. If below 95F (35C), immediately seek medical care! **If medical care is not available**, begin warming the person slowly.

- Warm the body core first, if needed, use your own body heat to help.
- Get the person into dry clothing and wrap them in a warm blanket covering them completely, including the head and neck.
- Do not give the person alcohol, drugs, coffee, or a beverage or food, warm broth is better.
- Do not warm extremities (arms and legs) first! This drives the cold blood toward the heart and can lead to heart failure.

Heart Attack

Strain from the cold and hard labor may cause a heart attack.

- Avoid overexertion, such as shoveling heavy snow. Pushing a car, or walking in deep snows, especially if you are not in peak physical condition.
- If you must shovel snow, take it slow and lift small amounts, especially when removing heavy snow, slush, or ice.

Prepare in Advance

- Have extra blankets on hand and ensure each member of your household has a warm coat, gloves/mittens, hat, and water-resistant boots.
- Check battery-powered equipment and make sure you have plenty of spare batteries.
- If you have propane or oil heat, check your fuel supply.
- Check your food supply and stock up on basic items.
- Have your car winterized before the winter season starts and always keep the fuel tank full.

Winter Dress

Plan from head to toe

- Wear a hat. This can prevent the loss of half your body heat.
- Gloves and warm socks help protect fingers and toes, which is where you can first feel the effects of cold temperatures.

Wear layers of loose-fitting, warm clothing

- Remove layers to avoid overheating, perspiration, and subsequent chill.
- Layering clothes helps prepare you for different conditions and activities.
- Use three essential layers - underwear, insulation, and outer shell - in different combinations to maintain comfort through changes in weather and exertion levels.

Underwear

- Provides basic insulation and moves moisture away from skin, preventing chill when activity stops.

Choose long underwear, or thin, snug-fitting pants with a long-sleeved T-shirt or turtleneck.

Insulation

- Use one or more layers, depending on conditions, including layers of pants to keep your legs warm.

Sweaters, sweatshirts, and other similar garments are good insulators.

Outer Shell

- Choose garments that are windproof, and preferably waterproof, such as those made of coated nylon or polyester. Many shells -such as ski jackets or parkas - combine the outer and insulating layers.

Good fit is crucial! If the shell is too big, heat loss can occur rapidly. If it is too small, you may not have enough room for insulating layers.

Food and drink

Food provides the body with energy for producing its own heat. Keep the body replenished with fluids (water and juice, limit your intake of caffeine and alcohol) to prevent dehydration