

WINTER WEATHER EMERGENCY CHECKLIST



BEFORE A STORM



PREPARE YOUR FAMILY

- ☐ **Stock up on emergency supplies:**
 - ☐ Non-perishable food and water for at least three days for each person
 - ☐ Flashlight with extra batteries
 - ☐ Portable chargers for cell phone
 - ☐ Battery-operated radio
 - ☐ Extra blankets
 - ☐ First-aid kit
 - ☐ Fire extinguisher that has been properly serviced
 - ☐ Medical supplies, including at least one week's worth of prescription medications
- ☐ **Make a communication plan.** Discuss how you'll communicate and store cell, work and school numbers in everyone's phones
- ☐ **Pick two regrouping locations:** an outdoor location on the property for emergencies like fires or gas leaks and a location off your property for when family members are away from home.
- ☐ **Practice your evacuation plan.** Family members should be able to identify basic escape principles and know where the exit points are.
- ☐ **Learn first aid**, including CPR.



PREPARE YOUR HOME

- ☐ **Winterize your home.**
 - ☐ Insulate walls and attics
 - ☐ Caulk and weather strip doors and windows
 - ☐ Install storm windows or cover windows with plastic
- ☐ **Clean chimneys and other heating equipment** and have them inspected yearly.
- ☐ **Check fuel supplies** like oil, propane or wood to make sure you have enough to last through a storm.
- ☐ **Prepare your pipes**
 - ☐ Insulate with insulation, newspaper or plastic
 - ☐ If a hard freeze is expected, turn faucets onto a slow drip to avoid solid freezing
- ☐ **Check smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.** In the event of an outage, you'll need these to detect gas or smoke from candles, generators or fireplaces.
- ☐ **Maintain your yard.** Cut off tree limbs that are close to your home.
- ☐ **Keep extra water for an outage.** If an outage is expected, fill up your tub and spare containers with water for drinking, cleaning and flushing the toilet in case the water cuts off.



PREPARE YOUR CAR

- ☐ **Fill up your gas tank** to prevent freezing and ensure you have fuel for emergency travel.
- ☐ **Winterize your vehicle.**
 - ☐ Check antifreeze levels
 - ☐ Check battery and ignition system
 - ☐ Replace fuel and air filters
 - ☐ Check for the level and weight of your oil as heavier oils congeal more at low temperatures and don't lubricate as well.
 - ☐ Make sure your windshield wipers are working well
 - ☐ Install good winter tires with adequate tread for winter weather. In extreme cases, use chains or snow tires with studs.
- ☐ **Practice safe driving**
 - ☐ Avoid extreme weather on the road
 - ☐ Drive slowly and carefully
 - ☐ Allow extra time to stop
 - ☐ If your car skids, steer into the steer in the direction that the rear of your vehicle is going.
 - ☐ Do not accelerate too much uphill
- ☐ **Pack an emergency kit in the trunk**
 - ☐ Booster cables in case your battery dies
 - ☐ Sand or cat litter to place in the snow for traction
 - ☐ Energy bars for protein
 - ☐ Warm clothes and blankets
 - ☐ Extra batteries for your smartphone
 - ☐ Shovel to dig out snow around your tires
 - ☐ Flashlight
- ☐ **Have your car serviced** by a certified mechanic to make sure it's winter-ready.

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DURING A WEATHER EMERGENCY AT HOME

- ☐ **Know your lingo.**
 - ☐ **Winter Weather Advisory:** significant amounts of precipitation are on their way, but not expected in sufficient amounts to cause major hazards.
 - ☐ **Winter Storm Watch:** severe weather conditions that can jeopardize life, limb and property are possible, but not assured, over the ensuing 48 hours.
 - ☐ **Winter Storm Warning:** a major storm carrying substantial amounts of precipitation is either on its way or already affecting your area and is serious enough to jeopardize lives or cause considerable property damage.
- ☐ **Prepare for specific conditions.**
 - ☐ **Blizzard Warning:** heavy wind and snowfall is likely to reduce visibility for extended periods of time.
 - ☐ **Ice Storm Warning:** a significant amount of ice will accumulate on the ground. Be extra careful on the roads and sidewalks.
 - ☐ **Freeze Watch or Warning:** it is possible or likely that freezing temperatures will endure for a day or longer.
 - ☐ **Stay connected** to the NOAA and National Weather Service for alerts and to FEMA or the American Red Cross for information on finding shelters and first aid.

DURING A STORM

- ☐ **Bring animals indoors**
- ☐ **Keep your phones charged**
- ☐ **Know the signs of frostbite and hypothermia**

What if the Power Goes Out?

- ☐ **Report the outage** to your utility company.
- ☐ **Stay warm.** Dress in your cold-weather clothes, use blankets and if you can do so safely, use alternate power sources or a backup generator in a well-ventilated area.
- ☐ **If your pipes do freeze,** try to warm them using hot water and rags or with a hair dryer. Do not use a torch.
- ☐ **Avoid downed power lines** and call your local utility to report any in your area.
- ☐ **Preserve the food in your refrigerator and freezer** by moving it to a cooler area like the basement.
- ☐ **Monitor the radio** for emergency information and updates.



DURING A WEATHER EMERGENCY IN YOUR CAR

- ☐ **Be responsible.** Travel at a cautious speed and keep your gas tank at least half-full to prevent freezing.
- ☐ **Try to stay on main roads** and avoid back road shortcuts.
- ☐ **Use sand or cat litter** to melt ice or gain more traction if you get stuck.
- ☐ **Clear snow** from the top of your car, headlights and windows. Do not pour water on windows to get rid of snow or ice.
- ☐ **Keep emergency contacts** like your car insurance and emergency towing service handy.
- ☐ **Stay in your car** if you are driving when the storm hits unless you are absolutely sure you can reach shelter on foot.
- ☐ **You can run your car periodically** to stay warm but don't keep the engine on too long.

AFTER A STORM

- ☐ **Stay away from power lines** and avoid driving on roads with fallen debris.
- ☐ **Be cautious of ice** that remains on roads and sidewalks.
- ☐ **Throw out any food** that may have spoiled during a power outage.
- ☐ **Shovel the walkways and use sand** to improve traction once it's safe to go outside.
- ☐ **Evaluate the condition of your house,** keeping an eye out for storm damage, leaks, and other issues.
- ☐ **Check on friends and neighbors,** especially any that are elderly, disabled or live alone.
- ☐ **Report any damage** to your local utility and other services.
- ☐ **Stay alert for flooding potential** once the snow and ice start to melt.
- ☐ **Restock your emergency kit** so you're prepared for any other emergencies.

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