

Adult Health Bulletin



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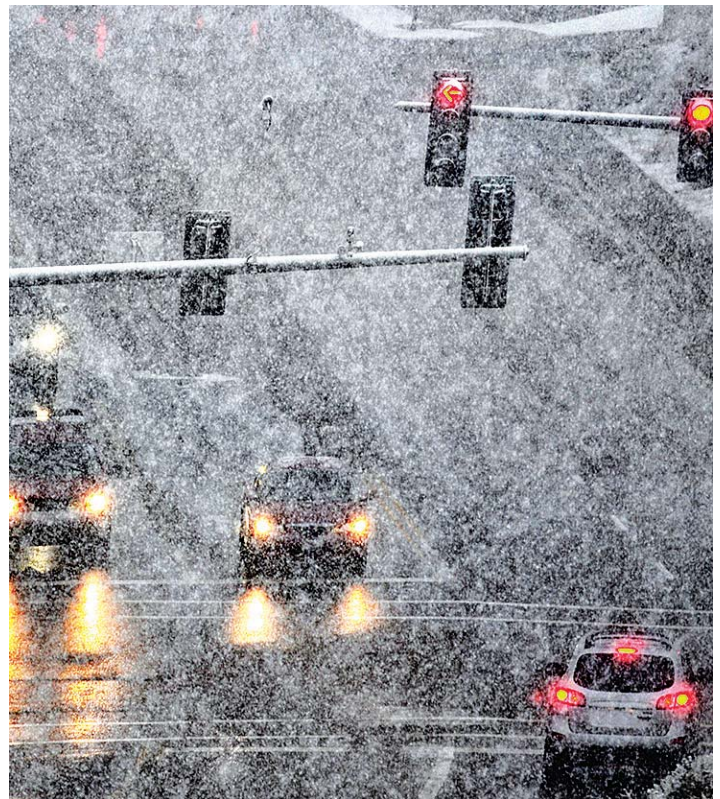
THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: PREPARING FOR WINTER STORMS

It is hard to tell if there will be many winter storms from year to year. Yet each year you should make sure that you are prepared for winter storms. Winter storms typically have low temperatures and are sometimes accompanied by icing, sleet, freezing rain and snow.

There are many different types of winter storms. A snow shower will give everything a good coat of white within a few hours, while a larger storm will last several days. If you are watching or listening to the news reports, here are a few phrases you may hear:

- **Winter storm outlook:** A winter storm is possible in the next 2 to 5 days.
- **Winter weather advisory:** Winter weather conditions are expected to cause major problems and may be unsafe. Caution should be used.
- **Winter storm watch:** Winter storms are possible within the next 36 to 48 hours. If there is a

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winter storm watch in your area, it is important to know your winter storm plan and make sure it is kept up-to-date.

- **Winter storm warning:** This warning signifies severe winter conditions have begun or will begin within 24 hours.

There are several important things to do to get ready for a winter storm. To prepare, it is recommended that you do the following:

- Keep the gas tank in your automobile close to full. A full gas tank will help keep the gas line from freezing in extremely cold temperatures.
- Storm windows help insulate your home. If you do not have storm windows, you can cover the windows in plastic to help keep the cold air out.
- Have rock salt or similar product to melt ice on walkways and driveways.

During a storm, make sure to stay safe by following these tips:

- Stay indoors if possible.
- If you have to go out, walk slowly and carefully. Patches of ice may not be seen.
- Drive only if you have to. Tell someone where you are going and what route you are going to take. Stay on main roads as much as possible.
- Make sure you have enough clothing to keep warm if going outside. Items to include are mittens (they are warmer than gloves), hat and scarf. The scarf can be used to cover your mouth if needed.

If you have pets, you will want to make sure they are safe during winter weather too. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- If you can, bring your pets inside during a winter storm. If you have livestock or other animals, make sure they have shelter and non-frozen water to drink.
- Salt and other chemicals used to melt snow may irritate your pet's paws. Make sure to wipe



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their paws off when they come inside. Not only will it help keep your floors clean, it will help prevent your pet from licking their paws and getting chemicals in their mouth.

Make sure to stay safe this winter. Following these tips will help keep you and your family safe and warm. Please visit your

local Extension office to find out more about ways to protect you and your family.

REFERENCES:

American Red Cross (2014). Winter Storm Preparedness. <http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/winter-storm>
Ready.gov (2014). Winter Storms and Extreme Cold. <http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather>

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