

ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN



DECEMBER 2018

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: WINTER WEATHER



Winter storms and cold temperatures are typically accompanied by ice, sleet, freezing rain and snow. While winter weather comes as no surprise, many of us are not ready for its arrival. If you take these steps to prepare for winter, you will be more likely to stay safe and healthy when winter comes.

If you are watching or listening to the news reports, here are a few phrases to know:

- **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 unsafe conditions. Use caution.

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If you have pets, bring them inside.



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- **Winter storm watch:** Winter storms are possible within the next 36 to 48 hours. If there is a winter storm watch in your area, it is important to stay up-to-date.
- **Winter storm warning:** Severe winter conditions have begun or will begin within 24 hours. Take all safety precautions.

When planning a trip, be sure to check the weather forecast for road conditions along your route before leaving.

Winterize your home

- Check your heating system.
- Inspect and clean your fireplaces and chimneys.
- Test your smoke detector batteries.
- Install a carbon monoxide detector.
- Stock food that is nonperishable.
- Sprinkle salt, cat litter or sand for traction on icy walkways.

Prepare your car

- Keep the gas tank full or close to full. A full tank will keep the fuel line from freezing.
- Have a winter emergency kit in your trunk that includes essentials:
 - Portable cell phone charger
 - Blankets
 - Flashlight
 - First aid kit

- Food and water
- Bag of sand or cat litter for traction

Animals and cold

- If you have pets, bring them inside.
- Make sure to wipe indoor pets' paws off when they come inside. This will help keep your floors clean but also prevent your pets from licking chemicals used to melt snow.
- If you have livestock or other animals, provide warm shelter and unfrozen water to drink.

When a winter storm hits, arrange to check on family and neighbors who are at risk from cold weather threats: young children, older adults, and the chronically ill. Make sure to stay safe this winter by following these tips. Please visit your local Extension office to find out more ways to protect yourself and your family.

REFERENCES

- https://www.redcross.org/content/dam/redcross/atg/PDF_s/Preparedness___Disaster_Recovery/Disaster_Preparedness/Winter_Storm/WinterStorms.pdf
- <https://www.cdc.gov/features/winterweather>
- <https://www.ready.gov/winter-weather>
- <https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/winter-storm.html>

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