



Winter Weather

[Prepare for Winter Weather](#)

[Stay Safe During](#)

[Associated Content](#)

Winter storms create a higher risk of car accidents, hypothermia, frostbite, carbon monoxide poisoning, and heart attacks from overexertion. Winter storms including blizzards can bring extreme cold, freezing rain, snow, ice and high winds.

A winter storm can:

Disasters and Emergencies

[All Hazards](#)

[Emergency Alerts](#)

[Attacks in Public Places](#)

[Avalanche](#)

[Bioterrorism](#)

Last a few hours or several days.

Cut off heat, power and communication services.

Put older adults, children, sick individuals and pets at greater risk.

How to Protect Yourself from Winter Weather

IF YOU ARE UNDER A WINTER STORM WARNING, FIND SHELTER RIGHT AWAY

Know your winter weather terms:

Winter Storm Warning

Issued when hazardous winter weather in the form of heavy snow, heavy freezing rain, or heavy sleet is imminent or occurring. Winter Storm Warnings are usually issued 12 to 24 hours before the event is expected to begin.

Winter Storm Watch

Alerts the public to the possibility of a blizzard, heavy snow, heavy freezing rain, or heavy sleet. Winter Storm Watches are usually issued 12 to 48 hours before the beginning of a Winter Storm.

Preparing for Winter Weather

Prepare your home to keep out the cold with insulation, caulking and weather stripping. Learn how to keep pipes from freezing. Install and test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors with battery backups. Gather supplies in case you need to stay home for several days without power. Keep in mind each person's specific needs, including medication. Remember the needs of your pets. Have extra batteries for radios and flashlights.

In Case of Emergency

Be prepared for winter weather at home, at work and in your car. Create an emergency

Chemical Emergencies

Cybersecurity

Drought

Earthquakes

Explosions

Extreme Heat

Floods

Hazardous Materials
Incidents

Home Fires

Household Chemical
Emergencies

Hurricanes

Landslides & Debris Flow

Nuclear Explosion

Nuclear Power Plants

Pandemic

Power Outages

Radiological Dispersion
Device

Severe Weather

Space Weather

Thunderstorms & Lightning

Winter Weather Advisory

Issued for accumulations of snow, freezing rain, freezing drizzle, and sleet which will cause significant inconveniences and, if caution is not exercised, could lead to life-threatening situations.

Know Your Risk for Winter Storms

Pay attention to weather reports and warnings of freezing weather and winter storms. Listen for emergency information and alerts. Sign up for your community's warning system. The Emergency Alert System (EAS) and [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\) Weather Radio](#) also provide emergency alerts.

supply kit for your car. Include jumper cables, sand, a flashlight, warm clothes, blankets, bottled water and non-perishable snacks. Keep a full tank of gas.

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Sign up for [email updates](#) about coronavirus from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Learn the [symptoms of COVID-19](#) and follow [CDC guidance](#). If you are able to, set aside items like soap, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol, disinfecting wipes, and general household [cleaning supplies that you can use to disinfect surfaces you touch regularly](#).

Tornadoes

Tsunamis

Volcanoes

Wildfires

Winter Weather

Recovering from Disaster

Make a Plan

Get Involved

Ready Business

Ready Kids

Resources

Stay Safe During Winter Weather



Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Only use generators and grills outdoors and away from windows. Never heat your home with a gas stovetop or oven.

- Stay off roads if at all possible. If trapped in your car, then stay inside.
- Limit your time outside. If you need to go outside, then wear layers of warm clothing. Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.
- Reduce the risk of a heart attack by avoiding overexertion when shoveling snow and walking in the snow.

Learn the signs of, and basic treatments for, frostbite and hypothermia.

Frostbite causes loss of feeling and color around the face, fingers and toes.

- **Signs:** Numbness, white or grayish-yellow skin, firm or waxy skin.
- **Actions:** Go to a warm room. Soak in warm water. Use body heat to warm. Do not massage or use a heating pad.

Hypothermia is an unusually low body temperature. A temperature below 95 degrees is an emergency.

- **Signs:** Shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech or drowsiness.
- **Actions:** Go to a warm room. Warm the center of the body first—chest, neck, head and groin. Keep dry and wrapped up in warm blankets, including the head and neck.

Associated Content

- [Winter Safety Social Media Toolkit](#)
- [Winter Storm Information Sheet](#) (PDF)

- [National Weather Service](#)
- [American Red Cross](#)
- [When The Sky Turns Gray - Animated](#) (Video)

Last Updated: 03/03/2021

[Return to top](#)

Ready.gov

[No Fear Act Data](#)

[Freedom of Information Act](#)

[Download Plugins](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Accessibility](#)

[Vulnerability Disclosure Policy](#)

[Accountability](#)

[Plain Writing](#)

Partner Sites

[Inspector General](#)

[The White House](#)

[DHS.gov](#)

[FEMA.gov](#)

USA.gov

