

WINTER STORMS

Weather Emergency Terms you Should Know:

Blizzard WARNING:

*Snow and strong winds will combine to produce a blinding snow with near zero visibility, deep drifts and life-threatening windchill. Avoid going outdoors!

Winter Storm WARNING:

*Severe winter conditions have begun, or are imminent in the warning area.

Winter Storm WATCH:

*Severe winter conditions, such as heavy snow and ice, are possible within the next day or two in the watch area.

Winter Storm TRAVELERS ADVISORY:

*Winter weather conditions are expected to hinder travel, but the anticipated weather conditions are not serious enough to require warnings in the advisory area.

Be Prepared Before a Winter Storm Occurs:

- Check your fire extinguishers, smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors to assure they are in good working order.
- Keep pipes from freezing.
- Keep building temperatures consistent —above 55 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Insulate pipes. Use “pipe-sleeves” or other insulating material.
- Open closets and cabinet doors to circulate warm air where pipes are located.
- As an emergency measure, let faucets drip slowly to avoid freezing (not recommended as a permanent measure).
- Make sure you have ready access to emergency equipment such as flashlights, first aid kits and a working battery powered radio.
- Keep fleet vehicles *winterized*. Carry a *survivor kit* in your car to include the following: cell phone or radio, blankets, flashlight, sand or cat litter, shovel, windshield scraper, tool kit, tow rope, jumper cables.
- Develop an emergency communication plan.

A backup generator is always useful in an emergency situation. Test the generator monthly to determine reliability. Install generator outdoors away from doors and windows. Electrical connections should be performed by a licensed electrician —the use of a transfer switch is a must.

During and After a Winter Storm:

- Listen to the current weather reports and emergency information.
- Dress for conditions. Layers of protective clothing are warmer than thick clothing.
- Mittens are warmer than gloves. Wear head gear.
- Before shoveling, warm up first, then stretch, and do not overexert yourself if you are unaccustomed to it —cold weather puts an extra strain on the heart and can bring on a heart attack, a major cause of death during and after winter storms.
- Take winter driving seriously; travel only if absolutely necessary.
- Watch for signs of frostbite or hypothermia. If symptoms are detected, seek medical attention.

REMEMBER: KEEP YOUR FLEET VEHICLES WINTERIZED!

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA):

<http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather>

The Weather Channel:

<http://www.weather.com/encyclopedia/winter/>