

STAY SAFE AND HEALTHY DURING EXTREME COLD WEATHER

For Release

January 9, 2019

Although we expect winter weather many of us do not prepare for its arrival. Preparation is the key to one's survival should an emergency arise. The Department of Fire and Rescue suggests the following safety tips to keep you and your home safe and warm during the winter months.

Winterize your home

- Insulate water lines that run along exterior walls.
- Have your heating system serviced professionally to make sure that it is clean, working properly and ventilated to the outside.
- Inspect and clean fireplaces and chimneys.
- Install a smoke detector. Test batteries monthly.
- Have a safe alternate heating source and alternate fuels available.
 - Protect against CO poisoning and install a CO detector to alert you of the presence of the deadly, odorless, colorless gas. Check batteries regularly.

Prepare for weather-related emergencies, including power outages

- Stock food that needs no cooking or refrigeration and water stored in clean containers (supplies to last up to three days).
- Keep an up-to-date emergency kit to include:
 - NOAA Weather Radio (stay informed of local weather and changing weather patterns).
 - Battery operated flashlights and/or lanterns.
 - Extra batteries.
 - First-aid kit.
 - Extra medicine.

Winterize your vehicle

- Service the radiator and maintain antifreeze level; check tire tread or, if necessary, replace tires with all-weather or snow tires.
- Keep gas tank full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines.
- Use a wintertime formula in your windshield washer.
- Prepare a winter emergency kit and keep in your car in case you become stranded. Be sure to Include:

- Blankets.
- Food and water.
- Booster cables, flares, tire pump, and a bag of sand or cat litter (for traction).
- Compass and maps.
- Flashlight, battery-powered radio, and extra batteries.
- Small shovel.
- Ice/snow scraper.
- Car charger for your cell phone.
- First-aid kit.
- Plastic bags (for sanitation).

Working, traveling or enjoying outdoor winter activities

- Be aware of the chill factor.
- Dress appropriately:
 - Wear layers of light, warm clothing to include mittens, hats, scarves and waterproof boots.
- If working outside, work slowly.
- If participating in outdoor activities, take a buddy and an emergency kit.
- ALWAYS carry a cell phone.

Traveling

- Prior to travel, be aware of current and forecast weather conditions.
- Avoid traveling when the weather service has issued advisories.
- If you must travel, inform a friend or relative of your proposed route and expected time of arrival.
- Allow extra time to reach your destination.
- If you become stranded in your car:
 - Stay with your car unless safety is no more than 100 yards away.
 - Stay visible:
 - Put bright cloth on the antenna.
 - Turn on the inside overhead light (when engine is running).
 - Raise the hood (when snow stops falling).
 - Run the engine and heater (10 minutes every hour).
 - Keep a downwind window open.
 - Make sure the tailpipe is not blocked.

Caring for Others

- Check on family, friends and neighbors who are at risk from cold weather hazards, have medical needs or may be ill.

- If you have pets who primarily reside outside, bring them inside or provide adequate warm shelter and unfrozen water to drink.

For more winter safety tips and current road conditions, visit Prince William Emergency Information at <https://emergency.pwcgov.org/>.