



Winter Storms & Extreme Cold

November 2008



Winter Storm and Extreme Cold Terms

Freezing Rain	Rain that freezes when it hits the ground, creating a coating of ice on roads, walkways, trees and power lines.
Sleet	Rain that turns to ice pellets before reaching ground and causes moisture on roads to freeze and become slippery.
Winter Storm Watch	A winter storm is possible in your area. Tune in to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio or television for more information.
Winter Storm Warning	A winter storm is occurring or will soon occur in your area.
Blizzard Warning	Sustained winds or frequent gusts to 35 miles per hour or greater and considerable amounts of falling or blowing snow are expected to prevail for a period of three hours or longer.
Frost/Freeze Warning	Below freezing temperatures are expected.

During a Winter Storm

Outdoors

- **Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow.**
- **Cover your mouth** to protect your lungs from extremely cold air.
- **Keep dry.** Wet clothing loses all insulation value and causes the loss of body heat.
- **Watch for signs of frostbite.** This includes loss of feeling and white or pale appearance in fingers, toes, ear lobes and the tip of the nose.
- **Watch for signs of hypothermia** such as uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness and exhaustion.
- **If symptoms of hypothermia are detected:**
 - Get the victim to a warm location.
 - Remove wet clothing.
 - Put the person in dry clothing and wrap the entire body in a blanket.
 - If the victim is conscious, give him or her warm beverages (non-alcoholic, non-caffeinated).
 - Get medical help as soon as possible.

During a Winter Storm

Indoors

- **Listen to the radio, television or NOAA Weather Radio.**
- **Eat regularly and drink ample fluids.** Avoid caffeine and alcohol.
- **If the pipes freeze,** remove any insulation and wrap pipes in rags. Completely open all faucets and pour hot water over the pipes, starting where they were most exposed to the cold.
- **Maintain ventilation when using kerosene heaters.** Refuel them outside and keep them at least three feet from flammable objects.

Dress for the Weather

- **Wear several layers** of loose fitting, lightweight, warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing. Outer garments should be tightly woven and water repellent.
- **Wear mittens,** which are warmer than gloves.
- **Wear a hat.**
- **Cover your mouth** with a scarf to protect your lungs.



Winter Awareness Week November 10 -14

Racine County Office of Emergency Management
730 Wisconsin Ave. • Racine, WI 53403 • (262) 636-3515
www.racineco.com/emergencymanagement

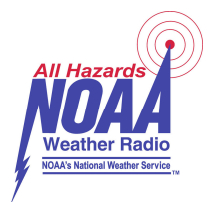


Prepare Your Home and Family:

- **Prepare for possible isolation** in your home by having sufficient heating fuel, or firewood for your fireplace or woodburning stove.
- **Winterize your home** by insulating walls and attics, caulking and weather-stripping doors and windows, and installing storm windows or covering windows with plastic.
- **Insulate pipes** with insulation or newspapers and plastic. Allow faucets to drip a little during cold weather to avoid freezing.
- **Keep fire extinguishers on hand** as people turn to alternative heating sources without taking the necessary safety precautions.
- **Learn how to shut off water valves** in case a pipe bursts.
- **Check on elderly and disabled family, friends and neighbors.**

Winter Facts

- ❄ Typically there are around 17,000 vehicle accidents in Wisconsin during winter months when roads are covered with ice, snow or slush.
- ❄ An average of 75 people are killed and 7,000 people are injured each winter season in accidents when roads are covered in ice, snow or slush.
- ❄ Many crashes are caused by "driving too fast for current conditions." When the first blast of winter arrives, motorists often need to "re-learn" how to drive in slippery conditions.



NOAA weather radios cost only \$20 - \$30 and provide immediate broadcasts of severe weather warnings and civil emergency messages. Stay posted and stay safe.

Prepare Your Car:

- **Check or have a mechanic check the following items on your car:**
 - Antifreeze levels
 - Battery and ignition system
 - Brakes
 - Exhaust system
 - Fuel and air filters
 - Heater and defroster
 - Lights and flashing hazard lights
 - Oil
 - Thermostat
 - Windshield wiper equipment
- **Install good winter tires.**
- **Maintain at least a half tank of gas.**
- **Place a winter emergency kit in each car that includes:**
 - Blankets or sleeping bags
 - Extra clothing
 - Flashlight with extra batteries
 - First-Aid Kit
 - Shovel, booster cables and windshield scraper
 - High-calorie non-perishable food
 - Sand or cat litter to use for traction



Is your family ready?

It's a good idea to always have a basic disaster kit ready for any kind of emergency situation. Go to www.fema.gov/plan/prepare/supplykit.shtm for information about what you should pack in your kit.

Partners



National Weather Service Milwaukee/Sullivan Office

The National Weather Service Forecast Office Milwaukee/Sullivan (KMKX) is located in Sullivan Township in Jefferson County, Wisconsin. The office is approximately three miles southeast of the town of Sullivan, 30 miles west of Milwaukee and 45 miles east of Madison. The Sullivan office has routine forecast and short-fused severe weather WARNING responsibility for southeast and south-central Wisconsin.



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