



# BE PREPARED FOR A WINTER STORM

Winter storms create a higher risk of car accidents, hypothermia, frostbite, carbon monoxide poisoning, and heart attacks from overexertion.



FEMA

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Winter storms and blizzards can bring extreme cold, freezing rain, snow, ice, and high winds.



Greater risk



Can last a few hours or several days



Can knock out heat, power, and communication services

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

Stay off roads.



Use generators outside only.



Stay indoors and dress warmly.



Pay attention to emergency information and alerts.



Prepare for power outages.



Look for signs of hypothermia and frostbite.



Check on neighbors.



# HOW TO STAY SAFE WHEN A WINTER STORM THREATENS

## Prepare NOW

**Know your area's risk for winter storms.** Extreme winter weather can leave communities without utilities or other services for long periods of time.

**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.

**Pay attention to weather reports and warnings of freezing weather and winter storms.** 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.

**Gather supplies in case you need to stay home for several days without power.** Keep in mind each person's specific needs, including medication. Do not forget the needs of pets. Have extra batteries for radios and flashlights.

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

**Learn to identify the signs of and basic treatments for frostbite and hypothermia.** For more information, visit: [www.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/staysafe/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/staysafe/index.html).

## Survive DURING

**Stay off roads if at all possible.** If trapped in your car, stay inside.

**Limit your time outside.** If you need to go outside, wear layers of warm clothing. Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.

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

**Reduce the risk of a heart attack. Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow.**

**Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia and begin treatment right away.**

**Check on neighbors.** Older adults and young children are more at risk in extreme cold.

## Recognize + RESPOND

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

- **Signs:** Numbness, white or grayish-yellow skin, and 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, and 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.



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## Take an Active Role in Your Safety

Go to [Ready.gov/winter-weather](http://Ready.gov/winter-weather). Download the **FEMA app** to get more information about preparing for a **winter storm**.