

# HOW TO STAY SAFE WHEN A WINTER STORM THREATENS

Prepare  
NOW

Survive  
DURING

Recognize  
+RESPOND

## 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 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).

**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.

**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.

## Take an Active Role in Your Safety

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



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