

Winter weather emergency checklist



Before a storm:

Prepare your family

- Stock up on emergency supplies**
 - Non-perishable food and water for at least 3 days for each person
 - Flashlight with extra batteries
 - Portable chargers for cell phone
 - Battery-operated radio
 - Extra blankets
 - First-aid kit
 - Fire extinguisher that has been properly serviced
 - Medical supplies, including at least 1 week's worth of prescription medications
- Make a communication plan.** Discuss how you'll communicate and store cell, work and school numbers on everyone's phones.
- Pick 2 regrouping locations:** An outdoor location on the property for emergencies like fires or gas leaks and a location on your property for when family members are away from home.
- Practice your evacuation plan.** Family members should be able to identify basic escape principles and know where the exit points are.
- Learn first aid**, including CPR.

Prepare your home

- Winterize your home**
 - Insulate walls and attics
 - Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows
 - Install storm windows or cover windows with plastic
- Clean chimneys and other heating equipment** and have them inspected yearly
- Check fuel supplies** like oil, propane or wood to make sure you have enough to last through a storm
- Prepare your pipes**
 - Insulate with insulation, newspaper or plastic
 - If a hard freeze is expected, turn faucets on to a slow drip to avoid solid freezing
- Check smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.** In the event of an outage, you'll need these to detect gas or smoke from candles, generators or fireplaces.
- Maintain your yard.** Cut off tree limbs that are close to your home.
- Keep extra water for an outage.** If an outage is expected, fill up your tub and spare containers with water for drinking, cleaning and flushing the toilet in case the water cuts off.

Prepare your car

- Fill up your gas tank** to prevent freezing and ensure that you have fuel for emergency travel
- Winterize your vehicle**
 - Check antifreeze levels
 - Check battery and ignition system
 - Replace fuel and air filters
 - Check for the level and weight of your oil, as heavier oils congeal more at low temperatures and don't lubricate as well
 - Make sure your windshield wipers are working well
 - Install good winter tires with adequate tread for winter weather. In extreme cases, use chains or snow tires with studs.
- Practice safe driving**
 - Avoid extreme weather on the road
 - Drive slowly and carefully
 - Allow extra time to stop
 - If your car skids, steer into the direction that the rear of your vehicle is going
 - Do not accelerate too much uphill
- Pack an emergency kit in the trunk**
 - Booster cables in case your battery dies
 - Sand or cat litter to place in the snow for traction
 - Energy bars for protein
 - Warm clothes and blankets
 - Extra batteries for your smartphone
 - Shovel to dig out snow around your tires
 - Flashlight
- Have your car serviced** by a certified mechanic to make sure it's winter-ready.

Learn more at:

directenergy.com/en/learn/weather-center/winter-weather-preparation

Winter weather emergency checklist



During a storm:

At home

Know your lingo

- Winter weather advisory.** Significant amounts of precipitation are on their way, but they are not expected to cause substantial hazards in sufficient quantities.
- Winter storm watch.** Severe weather conditions that can jeopardize life, limbs, and property are possible, but not assured, over the ensuing 48 hours.
- Winter storm warning.** A major storm carrying substantial amounts of precipitation is either on its way or already affecting your area. It is serious enough to jeopardize lives or cause considerable property damage.
- Prepare for specific conditions**
 - **Blizzard warning.** Heavy wind and snowfall will likely reduce visibility for extended periods.
 - **Ice storm warning.** A significant amount of ice will accumulate on the ground. Be extra careful on the roads and sidewalks.
 - **Freeze watch or warning.** It is possible or likely that freezing temperatures will endure for a day or longer.

- Stay connected** to the NOAA and National Weather Service for alerts, FEMA, or the American Red Cross for information on finding shelters and first aid.
- Bring animals indoors**
- Keep your phones charged**
- Know the signs of frostbite and hypothermia**

What if the power goes out?

- Report the outage** to your utility company.
- Stay warm.** Dress in your cold-weather clothes, use blankets and if you can do so safely, use alternate power sources or a backup generator in a well-ventilated area.
- If your pipes freeze,** try to warm them with hot water and rags or a hair dryer. Do not use a torch.
- Avoid downed power lines** and call your local utility to report any in your area. Preserve the food in your refrigerator and freezer by moving it to a cooler area like the basement.
- Monitor the radio** for emergency information and updates.

In your car

- Be responsible.** Travel at a cautious speed and keep your gas tank at least half-full to prevent freezing.
- Try to stay on main roads** and avoid back road shortcuts.
- Use sand or cat litter** to melt ice or gain more traction if you get stuck.
- Clear snow** from the top of your car, headlights and windows. Do not pour water on windows to get rid of snow or ice.
- Keep emergency contacts** like your car insurance and emergency towing services handy.
- Stay in your vehicle** if you are driving when the storm hits unless you are sure you can reach a shelter on foot.
- You can run your car periodically** to stay warm, but don't keep the engine on too long.

After a storm:

- Stay away from power lines** and avoid driving on roads with fallen debris.
- Be cautious of ice** that remains on roads and sidewalks.
- Throw out any food** that may have spoiled during a power outage.
- Shovel the walkways and use sand** to improve traction once it's safe to go outside.
- Evaluate the condition of your house,** keeping an eye out for storm damage, leaks and other issues.
- Check on friends and neighbors,** especially those who are elderly, disabled or live alone.
- Report any damage** to your local utility and other services.
- Stay alert for flooding potential** once the snow and ice start to melt.
- Restock your emergency kit** so you're prepared for any other emergencies.

Learn more at:

directenergy.com/en/learn/weather-center/winter-weather-preparation