TAKE WINTER BY STORM
TEACHER'S GUIDE

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Newspapers In Education
The Seattle Times
Inspiring Students To Learn

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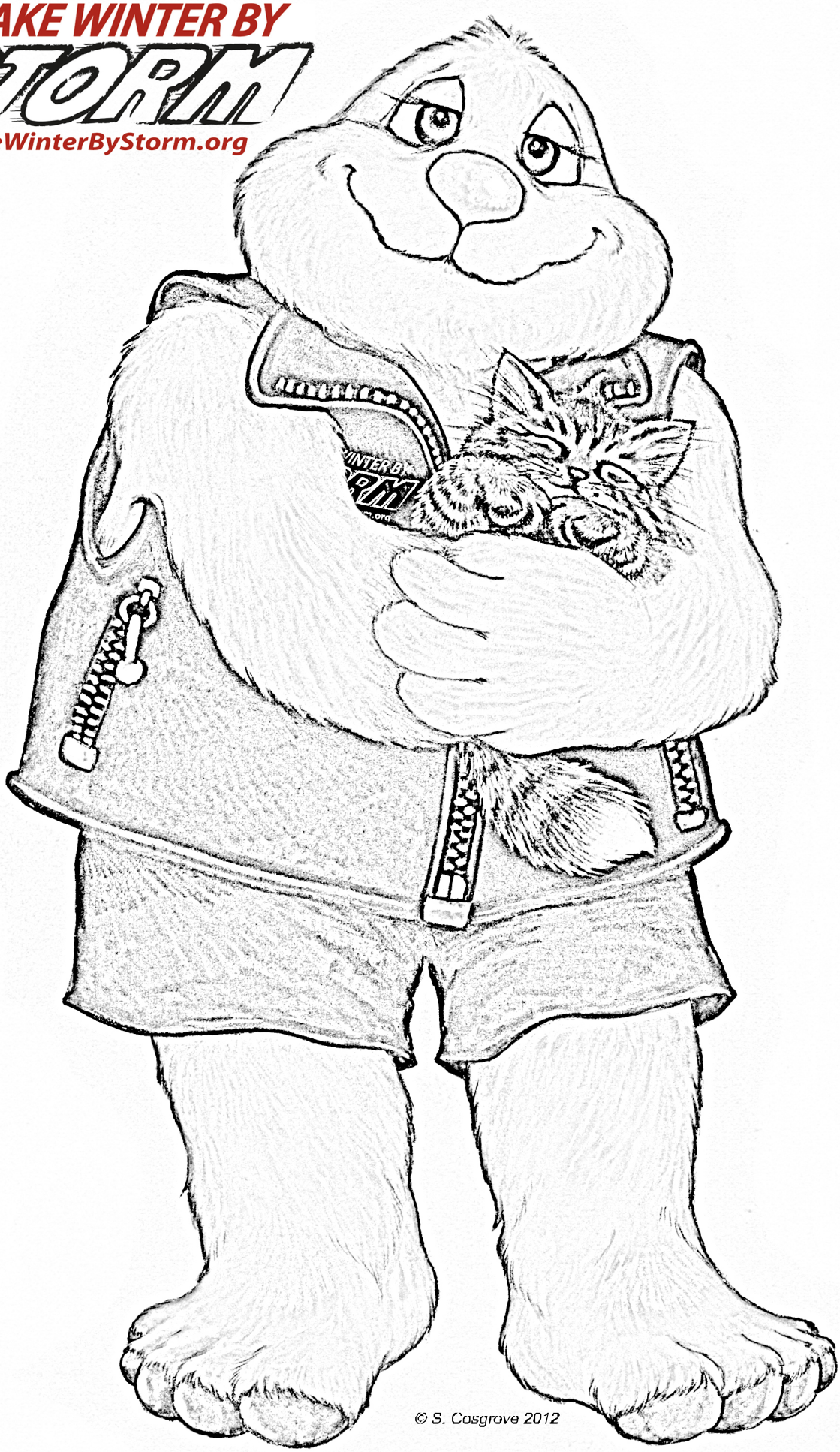

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Wheedle Preparedness Checklist at TakeWinterByStorm.org

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EMERGENCY CHECKLIST

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Be prepared to take care of yourself and those around you at least three days.

Build an emergency kit with at least three days of essentials (seven to ten days preferred) for family and pets. Kits should be portable and ready to go in the case of evacuation.

- [ ] Water – one gallon of water per person, per day, for at least three days (for drinking and sanitation)
- [ ] Non-perishable food – at least a three-day supply of non-perishable, ready-to-eat food and a manual can opener
- [ ] Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- [ ] Flashlight and extra batteries
- [ ] First aid kit
- [ ] Emergency Contact Card
- [ ] Multi-purpose tool
- [ ] Whistle to signal for help
- [ ] Antiseptic towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- [ ] Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air
- [ ] Cell phone with chargers (car charger recommended in the event of power outages)
- [ ] Thermal emergency blankets
- [ ] Rain ponchos for each family member
- [ ] Personal hygiene supplies (toothbrush, paste, sanitary napkins, soap, towel…)
- [ ] Copies of important documents, placed in a water proof container/bag
- [ ] Copy of your drivers license and/or birth certificate
- [ ] Bank account information
- [ ] Insurance cards/policy numbers/insurer contact information
- [ ] Cash (bank machines may not be functional, small bills are best)
- [ ] Extra set of house keys
- [ ] Prescription medications (seven-day supply suggested)
- [ ] Pet supplies (food, water, blanket, medications)
- [ ] Children/baby supplies (coloring book/crayons, diapers/wipes, formula, baby food)

** Always double-check expiration dates and update your emergency preparedness kit every 6 months. Use daylight savings dates as a reminder to double-check your kit.*

Other items to have on hand at your home or place of work or school

- [ ] Emergency Contact Card
- [ ] Instructions and tools to turn off gas, electricity and water
- [ ] Plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- [ ] Warm blankets
- [ ] Tarps, tents and rope
- [ ] Fire extinguisher
- [ ] Carbon monoxide detector
- [ ] Utilities contact information easily accessible in case of downed power lines, gas leaks or flood water
- [ ] Rake to remove fallen leaves and debris away from storm drains to prevent street flooding
- [ ] Water purification equipment
- [ ] Snow shovel and salt to remove snow and ice from pathways for your safety and the safety of others
- [ ] Outdoor faucet covers and/or insulation to wrap outdoor faucets to protect them from freezing
- [ ] Camping stove and fuel (for outdoor use only)
- [ ] Firewood and water-proof matches (for wood burning fireplace or outdoor use only)
- [ ] Medical supplies (hearing aids with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses and solution, syringes, cane)
- [ ] Two-way radios and extra batteries
- [ ] Local maps with pre-determined evacuation routes identified
- [ ] Additional unique family needs

Specific items to include in your vehicle

- [ ] Emergency Contact Card
- [ ] Flares
- [ ] Warm clothing and sturdy walking shoes
- [ ] Warm blankets
- [ ] Rain ponchos
- [ ] Preparedness kit with first aid supplies
- [ ] Small shovel and traction aides (sand, litter, chains) when freezing weather and snow is forecasted
- [ ] Local maps with pre-determined evacuation routes identified

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EMERGENCY CHECKLIST

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Create and follow a weatherization/risk management plan for your home or property to minimize storm impacts

- [ ] Conduct annual reviews of your property insurance to understand and address coverage needs. Ask about flood insurance or coverage for sewer/drain back-up.
- [ ] Complete a detailed home inventory of your possessions and keep in a safe place away from your home (like a safe deposit box). Downloadable form at TakeWinterByStorm.org.

Outdoors

- [ ] Check your roof for loose, missing, worn or damaged shingles to eliminate flying debris and reduce the chance of possible water damage.
- [ ] Make sure flashing is secure around vents and chimneys.
- [ ] Clean gutters and make sure they are properly aligned and securely attached to your home.
- [ ] Watch the patterns of storm-water drainage on slopes near your home, and note the places where runoff water converges. Watch the hills around your home for any signs of land movement, such as small landslides, debris flows or progressively tilting trees. Contact your local geotechnical or structural engineer to determine the severity of the problem.
- [ ] Grade property so water drains away from the foundation and downspouts direct water away from the house into the storm drainage system.
- [ ] Replace caulk and weather-stripping that has lost contact with surfaces.
- [ ] Rake leaves away from drains to avoid street and property flooding.
- [ ] Check for loose handrails, banisters and stair coverings. Buckled or cracked walks should be repaired.
- [ ] Clear snow and ice from sidewalks in front of your home to avoid dangerous falls (this is the home/property owner's responsibility).
- [ ] Keep snow build-up off of surfaces that could collapse.
- [ ] Trim shrubbery away from siding to prevent insect and moisture damage. Remove shrubbery that interferes with walkways.
- [ ] Insulate exposed water pipes and outdoor faucets to protect them from freezing.

Indoors

- [ ] Check smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and change batteries as needed. Replace units every eight years.
- [ ] Check basement and crawl space for dampness and leakage. Standing water could be a sign of improper drainage.
- [ ] Check all windows for proper operation and locking capability.
- [ ] Test your sump pump before the start of every wet season. Battery-operated back-up sump pumps can help protect against power failure of the primary pump.

Make a family communication plan

- [ ] Discuss with your family and/or friends how to prepare for and respond to emergencies that are most likely to happen where you live, learn, work and play. Identify responsibilities for each member of your household and plan to work together as a team.
- [ ] Identify an out-of-area contact. After a disaster, long distance phone lines may be more reliable than local lines. Ask a friend or relative who lives outside of Washington state to be your "family contact." After a disaster, your family contact becomes a communication point to share information with all household members. Your plan depends on everyone knowing your contact's phone number.
- [ ] Complete a Family Communication Plan and post in places your family spends most of their time. Download plans at TakeWinterByStorm.org.
- [ ] Program all emergency contact numbers into all of your phones, or keep a list with you. Make sure to tell your family and friends that you've listed them as emergency contacts.
- [ ] Use text messaging if network disruptions are causing phone calls not to go through. Wireless phones will not work if the electricity is out. Corded (also known as land line) phones are the most reliable.
- [ ] Stay informed. Tune in to local media channels for important updates and directives. Go to TakeWinterByStorm.org for links on how to register for emergency alert systems in your area.

** Let your family and friends know about TakeWinterByStorm.org. This Internet-based resource and educational tool should be integrated into your emergency preparedness and communication plans.*

EMERGENCY CHECKLIST

TAKE WINTER BY STORM
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Take Winter By Storm and The Wheedle, from "Wheedle on the Needle" by author Stephen Cosgrove, have teamed up to get you and your family prepared for winter weather. Get prepared now to take care of yourself and those around you for at least three days. Follow the checklist below...

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EMERGENCY CONTACT CARD

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Directions:

Print out a card for every member of your household and for all of your preparedness sites. Fill in your emergency contact information. Carry this card with you and keep one in your preparedness kit, home communication center, automobile and at your place of work or school to reference in the event of an emergency.

Important Phone Numbers

Police: 9-1-1 or _____

Fire: 9-1-1 or _____

Ambulance: 9-1-1 or _____

Poison Control Center: 1-800-222-1222

Healthcare Provider: _____

Insurance Provider: _____

Utilities (gas, electricity, water): _____

_____

_____

_____

FOLD HERE

My Contact Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

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Visit **TakeWinterByStorm.org** for more valuable information on creating an emergency communications plan, putting together an emergency preparedness kit and other important preparedness information.

FOLD HERE

Emergency Contacts

Local Contact

Name: _____

Phone (day): _____

Phone (night): _____

Address: _____

Out-of-area Contact

Name: _____

Phone (day): _____

Phone (night): _____

FOLD HERE

Meeting Place Information

Meeting Place Outside of Neighborhood

Location Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Other

_____

_____

_____

_____

Important Phone Numbers

Police: 9-1-1 or _____

Fire: 9-1-1 or _____

Ambulance: 9-1-1 or _____

Poison Control Center: 1-800-222-1222

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Emergency Contacts

Local Contact

Name: _____

Phone (day): _____

Phone (night): _____

Address: _____

Out-of-area Contact

Name: _____

Phone (day): _____

Phone (night): _____

Meeting Place Information

Meeting Place Outside of Neighborhood

Location Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Other

_____

_____

_____

_____

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FAMILY COMMUNICATION PLAN

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Make a Family Communication Plan

Your family may not be together when a storm disaster strikes. Plan how you will stay informed and contact one another. Review what you will do in different situations.

Discuss with your family and/or friends how to prepare for and respond to emergencies that are most likely to happen where you live, learn, work and play. Identify responsibilities for each member of your household and plan to work together as a team.

Learn how to use technology to be weather ready for storms. Go to www.TakeWinterByStorm.org for National Weather Service forecasts for your local area, weather information resources and to register for alert systems in your area.

Ask places your family frequents if they have site-specific emergency plans. Schools, childcare providers, workplaces and apartment buildings should have a plan, know who they will communicate with families during a crisis, and store adequate food, water and other basic supplies. Find out if they are prepared to "shelter-in-place" if need be, and where they plan to go if they must evacuate. Post this contact information on your Family Communication Plan and Emergency Contact Card.

Identify a safe out-of-neighborhood meeting place. During a storm related disaster, family members may not be in the same location. In case your neighborhood has been damaged in a storm related event, a safe out-of-neighborhood meeting place may be the best alternative. This place may also be the best place to meet in case family members get separated. Know the phone number and contact information of your family out-of-neighborhood meeting place.

Identify an out-of area contact. After a disaster, long distance phone lines may be more reliable than local lines. Ask a friend or relative who lives outside of Washington state to be your "family contact." After a disaster, your family contact becomes a communication point to share information with all household members. Your plan depends on everyone knowing your contact's phone number.

Complete the Family Communication Plan on the next page and post in places your family spends most of their time.

Complete the Emergency Contact Card and place in all preparedness kits, home communication center, automobile and at your place of work or school. You can find downloadable cards at TakeWinterByStorm.org.

Program all emergency contact numbers into all of your phones and keep a list with you because your personal address book on your phone may not be accessible. Tell your local emergency contact and out-of-area contact that you've listed them as emergency contacts. Make sure your out-of-neighborhood meeting place has a phone available for communication.

Use text messaging if network disruptions are causing phone calls not to go through. Wireless phones will not work if the electricity is out. Corded (also known as land line) phones are the most reliable.

Stay informed. Tune in to local media channels for important updates and directives. Go to **TakeWinterByStorm.org** for links on how to register for alert systems in your area.

Get your children involved in emergency preparedness. Go to TakeWinterByStorm.org for fun games and educational resources for children.

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FAMILY COMMUNICATION PLAN

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Make sure your family has a plan in case of an emergency. Before an emergency happens, sit down together and decide how you will get in contact with each other, where you will go and what you will do in an emergency. Keep a copy of this plan in your emergency supply kit or another safe place where you can access it in the event of a disaster.

Out-of-Town Contact Name: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Email: _____

Neighborhood Meeting Place: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Regional Meeting Place: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Evacuation Location: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Fill out the following information for each family member and keep it up to date.

Name: _____ Social Security Number: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Important Medical Information: _____

Name: _____ Social Security Number: _____

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Write down where your family spends the most time: work, school and other places you frequent. Schools, childcare providers, workplaces and apartment buildings should all have site-specific emergency plans that you and your family need to know about.

Work Location One

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Evacuation Location: _____

School Location One

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Evacuation Location: _____

Work Location Two

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Evacuation Location: _____

School Location Two

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Evacuation Location: _____

Other Place You Frequent

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Evacuation Location: _____

School Location Three

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Evacuation Location: _____

Important Information	Name	Telephone Number	Policy Number
Doctor(s)			
Other			
Pharmacist			
Medical Insurance			
Home Insurance			
Veterinarian/Kennel			

PET PREPAREDNESS

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Is Your Pet Ready for Winter Weather?

Just as you do with your family's emergency supply kit, think first about the basics for your pet's survival, particularly food and water. Consider two kits. In one, put everything you and your pets will need to stay where you are. The other should be a portable version you can take with you if you and your pets need to evacuate. Be sure to review your kits regularly to ensure that their contents, especially foods and medicines, are fresh.

Basics to Pack in your Pet Preparedness Kit

- ☐ Food for each pet
  - Keep at least three days of food in an airtight, waterproof container.
- ☐ Water for each pet
  - Store at least three days of water specifically for your pets, in addition to water you need for yourself and your family (one gallon of water per day for an animal the size of a large dog).
- ☐ Medicines and stress/anxiety reducers with medical instructions
  - Keep an extra supply of medicines your pet takes on a regular basis and during a stressful situation in a waterproof container. Keep instructions with the supply in case another person will be helping your pet(s).
- ☐ First aid kit for pets
  - Talk to your veterinarian about what is most appropriate for your pet's emergency medical needs. Most kits should include cotton bandage rolls, bandage tape and scissors, antibiotic ointment, flea and tick prevention, latex gloves, isopropyl alcohol and saline solution. Include a pet first aid reference book.
- ☐ Extra collar with current ID tag, harness or leash
  - Your pet should wear a collar with its rabies tag and identification at all times for identification purposes. Include a backup leash, collar and ID tag in your pet's emergency supply kit. Consider talking with your veterinarian about permanent identification such as micro-chipping, and enrolling your pet in a recovery database.
- ☐ Contact information and medical records
  - Keep one copy of the name and phone number of your veterinarian - along with emergency veterinarian hospitals, nearby kennels and animal shelters - with you and one in your kit. Place these along with copies of your pet's registration information, adoption papers, vaccination documents and medical records in a clean plastic bag or waterproof container and add them to your kit.
- ☐ Crate or other pet carrier
  - If you need to evacuate in an emergency situation take your pets and animals with you provided that it is practical to do so. In many cases, your ability to do so will be aided by having a sturdy, safe, comfortable crate or carrier ready for transporting your pet. The carrier should be large enough for your pet to stand, turn around and lie down. Make sure your name and contact information is on the carrier. Carriers make great places to keep your pet emergency kits, too.
- ☐ Sanitation materials
  - Include pet litter and a litter box if appropriate, as well as newspapers, paper towels, plastic trash bags and household liquid chlorine bleach to provide for your pet's sanitation needs. You can use bleach as a disinfectant (dilute nine parts water to one part bleach). If you can't boil water, in an emergency you can also use bleach to purify water. Add 1/8 teaspoon (or 8 drops) of regular, unscented, liquid household bleach for each gallon of water, stir it well and let it stand for 30 minutes before you use it.
- ☐ A picture of you and your pet together
  - If you become separated from your pet during an emergency, a picture of you and your pet together will help you document ownership and allow others to assist you in identifying your pet. Include detailed information about species, breed, age, sex, color and distinguishing characteristics.
- ☐ Additional unique needs and familiar comfort items
  - Put favorite toys, treats or special bedding in your kit. Familiar items can help reduce stress for your pet.

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PET PREPAREDNESS

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Create a Pet Plan

- ☐ Plan how you will assemble your pets in case of an evacuation and anticipate where you will go.
- ☐ Research other options. Find out before an emergency happens what facilities in your area or near your meeting place might be viable options for you and your pets. Options could include: hotels or motels that take pets; boarding facilities such as a kennels or veterinary hospitals that are near an evacuation facility.
- ☐ If you have ample warning of a severe weather event, such as possible flooding or freezing temperatures, be sure pets are brought inside.
- ☐ If you must evacuate, take your pets with you if practical. If you go to a public shelter, keep in mind your animals may not be allowed inside. Secure appropriate lodging in advance depending on the number and type of animals in your care.
- ☐ Consider family or friends willing to take in you and your pets in an emergency.

Develop a Buddy System

- ☐ Plan with neighbors, friends or relatives to make sure that someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so. Someone close to your pet's primary location is best.
- ☐ Talk with your pet care buddy about your evacuation plans and show them where you keep your pet's emergency supply kit.
- ☐ Keep your pet care buddy's contact information with you when you leave town. If you are away from home when a severe weather event occurs, call your pet buddy to check on your pet to make sure they are safe and secured inside.
- ☐ Designate specific locations (one in your immediate neighborhood and another farther away) where you will meet in an emergency.
- ☐ In case no one is available to help your pets, obtain or make your own "Pets Inside" sticker signs and place them on your doors or windows, including information on the number and types of pets in your home to alert firefighters and rescue workers. Consider putting a phone number on the sticker where you could be reached in an emergency. (And, if time permits, remember to write the words "Evacuated with Pets" across the stickers, should you flee with your pets.)

Talk to your Pet's Veterinarian about Emergency Planning

Discuss the types of things that you should include in your pet's emergency first aid kit. Get the names of vets or veterinary hospitals in other cities where you might need to seek temporary shelter. You should also consider talking with your veterinarian about permanent identification such as micro-chipping, and enrolling your pet in a recovery database. If your pet is micro-chipped, keeping your emergency contact information up to date and listed with a reliable recovery database is essential to you being reunited with your pet.

Gather contact information for emergency animal treatment.

Make a list of contact information and addresses of area animal control agencies including the Humane Society or Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and emergency veterinary hospitals. Keep one copy of these phone numbers with you and one in your pet's emergency supply kit. Obtain or make "Pets Inside" sticker signs and place them on your doors or windows, including information on the number and types of pets in your home to alert firefighters and rescue workers. Consider putting a phone number on the sticker where you could be reached in an emergency. And, if time permits, remember to write the words "Evacuated with Pets" across the stickers, should you flee with your pets.

Those who take the time to prepare themselves and their pets will likely encounter less difficulty, stress and worry. Take the time now to get yourself and your pet ready.

Preparedness on a Budget

Plan for the types of natural disasters that can happen in your area.

Create your own personalize list. You may not need everything included in “ready-made” kits and there may be additional items you need based on your personal situation. For example, if you have pets, you may need special items. Don’t forget to have supplies in your car and at work.

Look around your home first for items you can place in your kit using the personalized list you create. You may be surprised how many items you already have around your home that just need to be pulled together.

Budget emergency preparedness items as a “normal” expense. Even $20 a month can go a long way to helping you be ready. Buy one preparedness item each time you go to the grocery store.

Save by shopping sales. Make use of coupons and shop at stores with camping supplies and used goods. Dollar and used goods stores have a lot of needed supplies.

Test your emergency preparedness kit every 6 months. Only replace and cycle through those items that have a shelf life (i.e. water, food, batteries). You may want to test the radio and flashlight at the same time to make sure they are in good working order. Use Daylight Savings dates as your preparedness test reminder dates.

Store water in safe containers. You don’t have to buy more expensive bottled water, but make sure any containers you use for water storage are safe and disinfected.

Request preparedness items as gifts. We all receive gift we don’t need or use. What if your friends and family members gave you gifts that could save your life? Don’t forget to protect them by sending preparedness gifts their way, too.

Think ahead. You are more likely to save money if you can take your time with focused and strategic shopping. It’s when everyone is at the store right before a storm hits that you might buy things in urgency. Use a list to avoid duplicating items when you are stressed or panicked.

Review your insurance policy annually and make necessary changes. When a disaster strikes, you want to know that your coverage will help you get back on your feet. Renters need policies too, in order to cover personal property.

Update contact records. Have an accurate phone list of emergency contact numbers. If you are prepared, you may be able to help friends and neighbors who need assistance. By sharing preparedness supplies, you can help each other.

Trade one night out to fund your family emergency preparedness kit. For example, taking a family of four to the movies can cost upwards of $80-$100. Just one night of sacrifice could fund a family emergency preparedness kit.

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EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS KIT

TAKE WINTER BY STORM
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Shopping List:

Think first about the basics for your family's survival, particularly food and water. Consider two kits. In one, put everything you and your family will need to stay where you are. The other should be a portable version you can take with you in case of evacuation. Be sure to review your kits regularly to ensure that their contents, especially foods and medicines, are fresh.

Basics to pack in your Preparedness Kits for your home, work or school and vehicle:

- ☐ Water - one gallon of water per person, per day, for at least three days (for drinking and sanitation)
- ☐ Non-perishable food - at least a three-day supply of non-perishable, ready-to-eat food
- ☐ Battery powered radio/hand crank radio
- ☐ NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert
- ☐ Batteries (AAA, AA, C, D, 9-volt)
- ☐ Flashlight
- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Multi-purpose tool
- ☐ Whistle
- ☐ Antiseptic towelettes
- ☐ Garbage bags with plastic ties
- ☐ Dust mask
- ☐ Cell phone charger
- ☐ USB hand crank charger (may be included on hand crank radio)
- ☐ Blankets for each person
- ☐ Rain ponchos
- ☐ Personal hygiene supplies (toothbrush, paste, sanitary napkins, soap, towel, etc.)
- ☐ Prescription medications (seven-day supply suggested)
- ☐ Cash
- ☐ Can opener
- ☐ Paper and pencil for notes
- ☐ Pet supplies (food, water, blanket, medications)
- ☐ Children/baby supplies (diapers/wipes, formula, baby food, coloring book/crayons)

Additional items to have on hand at your home and work or school:

- ☐ 7 gallon water holding container
- ☐ Plastic sheeting and duct tape
- ☐ Additional blankets
- ☐ Fire extinguisher
- ☐ Carbon monoxide detector
- ☐ Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- ☐ Rake
- ☐ Snow shovel
- ☐ Deicer
- ☐ Sand/non-clumping litter
- ☐ Outdoor faucet insulation materials/covers
- ☐ Camping stove and fuel (for outdoor use only)
- ☐ Firewood and water-proof matches (for wood burning fireplace or outdoor use only)
- ☐ Water purification equipment
- ☐ Medical supplies (hearing aids and batteries, glasses, contact lenses and solution, syringes, cane)
- ☐ Emergency reference materials such as a first aid book
- ☐ Household liquid chlorine bleach (unscented with no added cleaners) and medicine dropper
  - You can use bleach as a disinfectant (dilute nine parts water to one part bleach). If you can't boil water, in an emergency you can also use bleach to purify water. Add 1/8 teaspoon (or 8 drops) of regular, unscented, liquid household bleach for each gallon of water, stir it well and let it stand for 30 minutes before you use it.
- ☐ Two-way radios
- ☐ Safety beacon/flashing light
- ☐ Extra batteries (AAA, AA, C, D, 9-volt)

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HOUSE MAINTENANCE LIST

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Your house is more than just an investment: It's your home. So naturally, you'll want to take good care of it. Take the time to prepare your home prior to the oncoming cold weather. Ready everything for the cold months ahead.

- ☐ Create and follow a weatherization/risk management plan for your home or property (like the one below) to minimize storm impacts and follow each year at the beginning of storm season.
- ☐ Conduct annual reviews of your property insurance to understand and address coverage needs. Ask about flood insurance or coverage for sewer/storm drain back-up.
- ☐ Complete a detailed home inventory of your possessions and keep in a safe place away from your home (like a safe deposit box). You can find a downloadable form at TakeWinterByStorm.org.

While following a general home maintenance schedule is important year-round, there are specific maintenance efforts you should focus on to protect your home during cold winter months. These guidelines can help you weather the winter season with a well-maintained home.

Roof, Attic and Gutters

- ☐ Check your roof for loose, missing, worn, or damaged shingles and make sure flashing is secure around vents and chimneys to eliminate flying debris and reduce the chance of possible water damage.
- ☐ Inspect the insulation in your attic and crawl space. Seal areas around recessed lights, the attic hatch, and plumbing vents that may be allowing warm air from the living space below to enter the attic.
- ☐ Gutters should be clean, properly aligned, and securely attached. Inspect gutters a few times during the fall and winter months, especially if there are many trees around your house.
- ☐ Gutters and downspouts should direct water away from the foundation, as well as away from walkways and driveways, so that they do not become slippery or icy.

Outside Walls and Framing

- ☐ Check soffits, siding, brick walls, trim, and flashing for damage, looseness, warping, and decay.
- ☐ Look for termite damage and signs of other insects or rodents.
- ☐ Keep snow build-up off of surfaces that could collapse.

Foundations and Basements

- ☐ Check foundations for signs of settling, such as bulging or shifting. Have a professional inspect cracks more than 1/8-inch wide.
- ☐ Check the foundation for small cracks or openings where mice or other pests can tunnel in. Winter is when they seek the warmth indoors, so seal up any possible entrances.
- ☐ Look in your basement and crawl spaces for dampness and leakage. Standing water could be a sign of improper drainage, which can weaken the foundation.
- ☐ Test your sump pump before every wet season. Consider installing battery-operated backup sump pumps to protect against a power failure or mechanical failure of the primary pump.

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors

- ☐ Check that detectors are functioning; change batteries at least once a year.
- ☐ Replace units every eight years.

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HOUSE MAINTANENCE LIST

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Doors and Windows

- [ ] Check your windows for cold air coming in that may compromise your heating efficiency. If you don't have double-paned windows, remove the screens and install storm windows to ensure that the heat stays in and the cold stays out. A cost efficient alternative is placing a plastic-film sheet kit around the window to keep the heat from escaping. Be sure to check your doors as well.
- [ ] Replace caulk and weather-stripping that has lost contact with surfaces.
- [ ] Add deadbolt locks to all exterior doors, including the door between the garage and your home. Use a heavy metal strike plate with three-inch screws and Grade 1 deadbolts for the highest level of protection.

Plumbing

- [ ] Pipes located in attics, crawl spaces, basements, and near outer walls can be susceptible to freezing in extreme temperatures. Insulate exposed water pipes to protect them from freezing and bursting. Think about replacing outdoor faucets with frost-proof models.
- [ ] Check your water heater. Most water heaters last eight to 12 years. Wet spots on the floor or a rusted tank may signal a problem. Water heaters should be installed on the lowest level of the home and always be located next to a floor drain.
- [ ] Wrap outdoor pipes and faucets with insulation materials or use inexpensive dome kits.
- [ ] Look around and under appliances and fixtures for leaks or wear. Check shutoff valves at all fixtures and the main water line annually.
- [ ] Replace washing machine water hoses every three to five years.

Electrical and Mechanical Systems and Utilities

- [ ] Have professionals check your air conditioning and furnace. Consider having your air ducts cleaned and filters replaced.
- [ ] Have an electrician inspect your electrical system.
- [ ] Plug sensitive electronic equipment and appliances into UL-listed surge protector power strips.
- [ ] Clean the clothes dryer exhaust duct and damper, and the space under the dryer.
- [ ] Locate the electric, gas and water shut-off valves. Keep necessary tools near gas and water shut-off valves and teach family members how to turn off utilities. If you turn the gas off, a representative from your natural gas utility must turn it back on. Do not attempt to do this yourself.
- [ ] Clear snow off utilities meters and away from basement windows and your dryer exhaust vent.

Landscaping, Walks and Porches

- [ ] Rake leaves away from storm drains and keep them clear to avoid flooding streets and damage to personal property. Gather leaves into yard waste containers for correct recycling.
- [ ] Trees should be healthy and placed at a safe distance from the home. Trim shrubbery branches away from siding to help prevent insect and moisture damage. Icy conditions can cause branches to break and damage your home.
- [ ] Check that mulch and earth are eight inches below siding.
- [ ] Remove shrubbery that interferes with walkways.
- [ ] Watch the patterns of storm-water drainage on slopes near your home, and note the places where runoff water converges.
- [ ] Grade property so water drains away from the foundation and downspouts direct water away from the house into the storm drainage system.
- [ ] Watch the hills around your home for any signs of land movement, such as small landslides, debris flows or progressively tilting trees. Contact your local geotechnical or structural engineer to determine the severity of the problem.
- [ ] Check for loose handrails, banisters and stair coverings.
- [ ] Repair buckled or cracked walkways.
- [ ] Clear your sidewalks of snow and ice with salt, deicer and/or snow shoveling to avoid injuries on your property.

GET READY FOR WIND STORMS

TAKE WINTER BY STORM
TakeWinterByStorm.org

Watch weather forecasts for potential wind storms. These guidelines can help you get prepared before the winds blow.

Personal Preparedness

- [ ] Use the Take Winter By Storm Checklist to prepare an emergency kit, including a radio, flashlight, extra batteries, a first-aid kit, emergency contact information, water, and non-perishable food. You can find a detailed list at TakeWinterByStorm.org.
- [ ] Keep flashlights, extra batteries and your utility's contact information in an easy-access location at home and work in case of power outages.

Power Outages

- [ ] Prepare for power outages in advance of storm season.
  - If you are planting trees near power lines, make sure to plant the right tree in the right place so it's growth doesn't interfere with power lines.
  - Call your electric utility if you see trees on or near your property that are interfering with power lines.
- [ ] Report power outages or downed power lines as soon as they occur by calling your utility.
- [ ] Always stay away from downed power lines; or anything near a power line.
- [ ] If you find yourself near a downed power line, shuffle your feet away from the power line to avoid ground shock.
- [ ] Do not drive over downed power lines. Should a power line fall on your car when you're driving, stay in the car until help arrives.
- [ ] If you must leave your car because of fire or other danger, jump away from the vehicle so that you do not touch the vehicle and ground at the same time. Land with your feet together and shuffle your feet away from the line to a safe location.
- [ ] If your power goes out, use flashlights. Avoid candles, oil lamps or anything with an open flame.
- [ ] Never use charcoal or gas grills as an indoor heating or cooking source. They can cause carbon monoxide poisoning.
- [ ] Use light sticks or small flashlights as landing strips for trip-prone areas in your home. Pick-up clutter around the floors to avoid stubbed toes.
- [ ] Follow manufacturer's instructions when operating a generator. Test the operation of generators prior to a power outage and review manufacturer recommendations on connections and fueling. Locate generators outdoors and far from doors, windows and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors.
- [ ] Never use a generator inside homes, garages, crawlspaces, sheds or similar areas. Deadly levels of carbon monoxide can quickly build up in these areas and can linger for hours, even after the generator has shut off.
- [ ] Install battery-operated carbon monoxide alarms or plug-in carbon monoxide alarms with battery back-up in your home, according to the manufacturer's instructions. Test batteries often.
- [ ] Keep your contact devices (cell phones, smart phones, laptops, tablets) fully charged in case of a power outage or prior to heading out into the elements for an extended length of time. To ensure backup, bring chargers and vehicle chargers for your contact devices with you.
- [ ] Use text messaging if power outages and network disruptions are causing phone calls not to go through. Wireless phones will not work if the electricity is out. Corded (also known as land line) phones are the most reliable.
- [ ] Stay informed. Use your battery or hand crank radio to tune in to local media channels for important updates and directives. Go to TakeWinterByStorm.org for links on how to register for alert systems in your area.

When wind storms strike, first ensure your own safety. Then check in with family, friends, and neighbors to make sure they are OK.

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GET READY FOR HEAVY RAINS AND FLOODING

TAKE WINTER BY STORM
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Watch weather forecasts for the potential of heavy rains or rainfall build-up over multiple days. These guidelines can help you get prepared before the waters rise.

Personal Preparedness

- [ ] Use the Take Winter By Storm Checklist to prepare an emergency kit, including a radio, flashlight, extra batteries, a first-aid kit, emergency contact information, water, and non-perishable food. You can find a detailed list at TakeWinterByStorm.org.
- [ ] Keep rain gear, water repellent clothing and extra warm clothing handy at home, work and in your vehicle to use in an emergency.

Drainage/Landslides

- [ ] Rake leaves and debris away from storm drains to keep them clear to avoid flooding streets and damage to personal property.
- [ ] Report flooding drains and streets as soon as possible.
- [ ] Double-check your homeowner's policy to see if you are covered for storm water damage in your home – if not, add this coverage to your insurance.
- [ ] Watch the patterns of storm water drainage on slopes near your home, and note the places where runoff water converges.
- [ ] Grade property so water drains away from the foundation and downspouts direct water and from property into the storm drainage system.
- [ ] Watch the hills around your home for any signs of land movement, such as small landslides, debris flows or progressively tilting trees. Contact your local geotechnical or structural engineer to determine the severity of the problem.

Flooding

- [ ] Keep valuables on high shelves when storing materials in basements or in areas that are prone to floods.
- [ ] Stay out of flooding basements. You could be electrocuted or drown.
- [ ] Never drive into standing water or around road-closure signs.
- [ ] If your vehicle stalls in water, abandon it and get to higher ground. It takes only a foot or two of rapidly-moving water to sweep away a car.
- [ ] If you live near rivers that historically flood, be prepared for river flooding. Have an emergency kit ready to grab and go in case of evacuation.
- [ ] Be safe. If a flood warning is issued, get to higher ground immediately! Follow evacuation and other official directions during flood emergencies, but don't wait for them if you think you are in danger.
- [ ] Walking or playing around flood waters is dangerous; you can be knocked from your feet in water only six inches deep!
- [ ] Homeowners, renters and businesses should purchase flood insurance.
- [ ] If your natural gas furnace shuts down because of flooding, shut off the electric supply to the furnace until the water recedes and ducts are dry.
- [ ] If you smell a natural gas odor or suspect a leak, leave your home or building immediately and call your natural gas utility or 911.
- [ ] Notify your natural gas utility if flooding causes water levels to cover your gas meter. A representative from the utility will need to check the meter and regulator before any gas appliance can be used.
- [ ] If you have to evacuate your home or building as the result of a flood, shut off your gas and electricity, only if you can do so safely. This may prevent damage to your gas and electric appliances.
- [ ] Call your natural gas utility to schedule a service-check for your natural gas appliances after they have dried out and the area around the affected appliances has been cleaned.

When heavy rains strike, first ensure your own safety. Then check in with family, friends, and neighbors to make sure they are OK.

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GET READY FOR FREEZING TEMPERATURES AND SNOWFALL

TAKE WINTER BY STORM
TakeWinterByStorm.org

Watch weather forecasts for potential of freezing temperatures and snow. These guidelines can help you get prepared before the freeze and snow.

Personal Preparedness

- [ ] Use the Take Winter By Storm Checklist to prepare an emergency kit, including a radio, flashlight, extra batteries, a first-aid kit, emergency contact information, water, and non-perishable food. You can find a detailed list at TakeWinterByStorm.org.
- [ ] Keep cold weather clothing and extra blankets handy at home, work and in your vehicle to use in an emergency to minimize heat loss.
- [ ] Keep portable heaters away from furniture, draperies and other flammable materials.

Cold/Freezing Weather Home Maintenance

Before the cold hits...

- [ ] Insulate pipes in your home's crawl spaces and attic. These exposed pipes are most susceptible to freezing. Remember - the more insulation you use, the better protected your pipes will be.
- [ ] Heat tape or thermostatically-controlled heat cables can be used to wrap pipes. Be sure to use products approved by an independent testing organization, such as Underwriters Laboratories Inc., and only for the intended use (exterior or interior). Closely follow all manufacturers' installation and operation instructions.
- [ ] Seal leaks that allow cold air inside near where pipes are located. Look for air leaks around electrical wiring, dryer vents and pipes. Use caulk or insulation to keep the cold out and the heat in. With severe cold, even a tiny opening can let in enough cold air to cause a pipe to freeze.
- [ ] Wrap outdoor pipes and faucets to keep them from freezing.
- [ ] Disconnect garden hoses and, if practical, use an indoor valve to shut off and drain water from pipes leading to outside faucets. This reduces the chance of freezing in the short span of pipe just inside the house.

When the mercury drops...

- [ ] A trickle of hot and cold water might be all it takes to keep your pipes from freezing. Let warm water drip overnight, preferably from a faucet on an outside wall.
- [ ] Open cabinet doors to allow heat to get to un-insulated pipes under sinks and appliances near exterior walls.
- [ ] Clear your sidewalks of snow and ice with salt, deicer and/or snow shoveling to avoid injuries on your property.
- [ ] Keep snow build-up off of surfaces that could collapse.

Before you leave your home for travel...

- [ ] Set the thermostat in your house no lower than 55°F (12°C).
- [ ] Ask a friend or neighbor to check your house daily to make sure it's warm enough to prevent freezing.
- [ ] Shut off and drain the water system. Be aware that if you have a fire protection sprinkler system in your house, it will be deactivated when you shut off the water.

When freezing temperatures and snow strike, first ensure your own safety. Then check in with family, friends, and neighbors to make sure they are OK.

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GET READY FOR WINTER WEATHER DRIVING

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Double-check weather forecasts and traffic reports during winter weather storms. These guidelines can help you get prepared prior to your travels.

Winter Vehicle Maintenance

- [ ] Before the weather turns bad, make sure your vehicle is properly serviced and maintained. Ensure the electrical systems, brakes, batteries, lights, windshield wipers, antifreeze and heating and cooling systems are in good shape.
- [ ] Check your tires - they are very important. Keep tires properly inflated and make sure they have adequate tread. Plan ahead - tire dealers are busiest before and during winter storms.
- [ ] Use the Take Winter By Storm Checklist to prepare a vehicle emergency kit, including a radio, flashlight, extra batteries, a first-aid kit, emergency contact information, water, and non-perishable food. You can find a detailed list at TakeWinterByStorm.org.
- [ ] Double-check your vehicle for winter weather travel gear like extra warm clothing, a blanket, a small shovel, sand or non-clumping litter, emergency flares, deice materials, tire chains, and an ice scraper.
- [ ] As the temperature drops, keep your gas tank at least half full; the extra gas helps reduce condensation that can plug your fuel line with ice and stall your engine in cooler weather.
- [ ] Make sure your vehicle is completely up to date on regular scheduled maintenance to avoid costly repairs, reduce C02 emissions, and maintain optimum fuel economy.
- [ ] Carry tire chains and double check they are a proper fit for your vehicle's tires.

Additional Items To Include In Your Vehicle*

- [ ] Portable Water
  - Four, 16oz bottles per person per day (change out frequently)
- [ ] Non-perishable Food
  - Easy-open snack bars, trail mix, crackers
- [ ] First aid kit, including personal medications
- [ ] Flashlight and extra batteries
- [ ] Emergency Contact Card
  - Place with vehicle insurance information
- [ ] Winter clothing for each traveler
  - Carry coats, boots, hats, gloves/mittens and/or scarves for each traveler – anything that would keep them warm if they need to evacuate the vehicle
- [ ] Whistle to signal for help
- [ ] Hand warmers
- [ ] Blankets for each traveler
- [ ] Rain gear
- [ ] Emergency flares and bright roadside traffic signal (cone, triangle)
- [ ] Safety beacon/flashing light
- [ ] Tool kit
  - Include adjustable wrench, screw driver with adjustable bits (flat, square, Phillips), hammer, tow rope, duck tape
- [ ] Deicer for vehicles
- [ ] Ice scraper/brush
- [ ] Jumper cables
- [ ] Small shovel and traction aids (sand, non-clumping litter, chains)
- [ ] Paper, pen and local maps (with pre-determined travel routes)
  - If you must leave your vehicle, be sure to leave a note telling others your travel plans
- [ ] Cell phone charger and/or extra battery
- [ ] Antiseptic towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation

**For a list to build a more detailed personal preparedness kit for your vehicle, go to TakeWinterByStorm.org.*

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GET READY FOR WINTER WEATHER DRIVING

TAKE WINTER BY STORM
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Winter Driving and Travel. Driving in perfect weather can be hard enough. But when severe weather hits, it's important to take extra precautions.

- ☐ If bad weather is predicted, check the forecast before heading out and adjust your travel plans if you can. If bad weather is forecast, consider postponing your trip.
- ☐ Watch out for standing water, which can cause hydroplaning, and remember bridges and overpasses freeze first, so approach them cautiously and avoid sudden changes in direction.
- ☐ Don't use high beams. Visibility is usually compromised in winter weather conditions. Day or night, headlights should be on and set to low beam.
- ☐ Turn on wipers. Obvious, right? But make sure your wipers are replaced every six to twelve months for optimal performance.
- ☐ Do not drive through deep standing water or around road closure signs - the water may be deeper than you think. Driving through standing water is the leading cause of flood-related death. Flooding can also conceal dangerous road damage or downed electrical lines. Obey closure signs until the water has receded and the road has safely reopened. Turn around. Don't drown!
- ☐ If a flash flood causes water to rise around your car, abandon the vehicle and move to higher ground if you can do so safely. You and the vehicle can be quickly swept away. Be especially vigilant when traveling at night!
- ☐ When there's snow on the ground, do not travel unless you have to. Staying home will keep you and others safe. If you must travel, check for local road closures and try to map the safest and least accident prone route.
- ☐ When traveling, be aware of ice hazards, especially on shaded roadways, bridges or in high elevation areas prone to freezing.
- ☐ If you have to travel, stay on the main roads and travel prepared with extra warm clothes, a blanket, a small shovel, sand or non-clumping litter, emergency flares, deice materials, tire chains, and an ice scraper.
- ☐ Before you head out, maximize visibility by making sure your windows and mirrors are defrosted - keep the AC on to keep them from fogging up while you're driving.
- ☐ During high winds, look out. Keep an eye out for flying debris and use extra caution near trailers, vans, or vehicles carrying lightweight cargo. Some vehicles shouldn't be driven. It's best not to drive a trailer, van, or other "high-profile" vehicle in high winds.
- ☐ While driving in inclement weather, slow down and allow greater following distance. It takes longer to stop on wet or icy roads, so instead of staying the usual 3-4 seconds behind the car ahead, give it 8-10. Large trucks take longer to stop.
- ☐ Four and all-wheel drive vehicles will not stop or steer better in icy conditions than two-wheel drive vehicles.
- ☐ When driving in a multiple lane road during snow and ice conditions, stay in the lane that is most clear and avoid unnecessary lane changes. Be sure to use directional signals when changing lanes to indicate your intentions.
- ☐ Steering and braking are more difficult on snowy or icy roads. Steer with smooth, careful movements. Avoid any abrupt braking that could cause you to lose control. With anti-lock brakes, apply constant, firm pressure to the pedal. If you have to take evasive action to avoid hitting something else, it's best if possible to steer your way around the obstacle than to brake.
- ☐ If you get stuck in snow, straighten your wheels and accelerate slowly to avoid spinning the tires. If it's safe to get out of the car, use flares to alert other cars to your presence and use sand under the drive wheels or use your shovel to dig some of the snow out. If the wheels continue to spin and you can't get un-stuck, do not get out of the vehicle. Turn on your emergency flashers and phone for help.
- ☐ While traveling in severe winter weather and you come across a road maintenance vehicle, slow down and move out of the way to give them plenty of room to help clear the roadway. If behind a road maintenance vehicle, stay behind it until it is safe to pass. They have a limited field of vision while at work.
- ☐ Slow down and be extra cautious near chain-up and removal areas. There are often people out of their vehicles.
- ☐ If you must abandon your car during a snowstorm, pull as far off the road as safely possible to avoid blocking other vehicles and snow removal equipment.
- ☐ If you must get out of your vehicle alongside the road during inclement weather, use reflectors such as reflective tape or flashing lights to be better seen by passing vehicles.
- ☐ During periods of ice or snow, Transit service may be rerouted, cancelled, or delayed. Know your bus snow route but expect delays. Find winter weather Transit schedule links and a Public Transportation checklist through TakeWinterByStorm.org.

GET READY TO USE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION DURING WINTER WEATHER

TAKE WINTER BY STORM
TakeWinterByStorm.org

Watch weather forecasts for potential of freezing temperatures and snow. These guidelines can help you get prepared before the freeze and snow.

Know Before You Go

- ☐ Well before winter weather arrives, make a plan and a back-up plan for using public transportation when travel conditions worsen. Check websites of the various transportation agencies you use to find winter-travel information.
- ☐ Check weather and road conditions before you leave. If traffic is delayed in the areas where you plan to travel, then transit will likely be delayed.
- ☐ Check online for the status of rail, bus or ferry service with the appropriate agency.
- ☐ Know the snow routing for the systems and routes you use; be aware that some locations might not be served during snowy or icy weather.
- ☐ Subscribe to alerts offered by the different transit agencies you use, or may want to use during winter weather.
- ☐ Also, subscribe to local and regional emergency alert notifications.
- ☐ Know your employer's policies about coming to work in an emergency, and when transportation services are limited.
- ☐ If you plan to telecommute, test your hardware and software in advance and keep chargers and extra batteries for backup.

How To Prepare Yourself

- ☐ Give yourself extra time to travel by bus, train or ferry. Winter weather can disrupt schedules and routes. Also, increased ridership during bad weather can result in crowded rides.
- ☐ Be prepared for a longer-than-usual wait on the phone for the customer information service.
- ☐ Head for boarding areas at major transportation hubs. For bus service, go to stops on main arterials or at major transfer points such as park-and-ride lots, transit centers, or shopping centers.
- ☐ Dress warmly for the walk to bus stops, train stations, and ferry docks. Be sure to wear appropriate footwear for the weather. You may have to wait outdoors longer than you would normally.
- ☐ Pack and bring extra portable water, non-perishable food, mini first aid kit, medicines, small flashlight with extra batteries and a whistle (to signal for help) with you just case of an emergency.
- ☐ Bus riders should wait at bus stops at the very top or very bottom of hills, because buses are often unable to stop for passengers on inclines.
- ☐ Be aware that bus tracking programs lose accuracy when buses are rerouted or significantly delayed, so your favorite smartphone apps may not be reliable during this time.
- ☐ Keep your contact devices (cell phones, smart phones, laptops, tablets) fully charged prior to heading out in the elements for an extended length of time. To ensure backup, bring chargers for your contact devices with you.

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