



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Winter Weather Safety Information

Winter storms can bring hazardous conditions, ranging from freezing rain and high winds to sleet, snow and ice. Here are some winter weather safety tips as provided by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.

Basic weather safety involves staying off the roads, dressing in layers, having emergency supplies ready and avoiding overexertion.

Driving

- Once freezing rain or snow begins to fall, stay off the roads. Only travel if absolutely necessary, and if you do, wear a seat belt.
- Know roads conditions before you leave. Current road conditions are available by calling 5-1-1 or visiting 511Virginia.gov.
- Have emergency supplies in your car. If you become stranded, you will need water, food, blankets, a radio, flashlight and extra batteries. Stay with your car. The Virginia Department of Transportation recommends running the car engine for heat for 10 minutes and then turning off the engine for 20 minutes.

Health concerns

- Wear loose layers and a hat.
- Avoid overexertion during clean up, no matter your age or physical condition. Shoveling snow or pushing a car can bring on a heart attack or make other medical conditions worse.

Emergency heat

- Generators should always be run outside, in well-ventilated areas. Get to fresh air immediately if you start to feel sick, weak or dizzy. Seek medical help if needed.
- Never use a portable generator in any enclosed or partially enclosed space. Windows and doors do not provide enough ventilation.
- Kerosene and propane heaters can cause fires if left unsupervised. If you use one, use only the recommended fuel. Always refuel outdoors safely away from your home. Make sure that the motor is cool when you refuel.
- Use fireplaces, wood stoves, and other combustion heaters only if they are properly vented to the outside and do not leak flue gas into the indoor air space. Make sure chimneys and flues are cleaned periodically.
- Keep an eye on your heater at all times while it is running. Shut it off before you go to bed or when you leave the house.

Emergency assistance

If you have a life-threatening emergency, call 9-1-1.

Detailed safety and preparedness information is available at
<http://www.ReadyVirginia.gov>.

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