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Public Information Statement  
National Weather Service Chicago IL  
900 AM CST Sun Nov 12 2017

...This is Winter Weather Preparedness Week...

This week, November 12th through November 18th, is Winter Weather Preparedness week in Illinois and Indiana.

Are you weather ready? Take time to prepare yourself and your family for the coming winter months. Throughout this week, helpful information will be available from federal, state, and local agencies, disaster relief organizations, and public safety groups.

Make sure you have plenty of non-perishable food, drinking water, a battery powered weather radio and portable AM/FM radio, flashlights, medication and a first aid kit. Also, have a plan for warmth and safety in case you lose power and heat. Create a kit for each vehicle you have with many of the same items but include extra clothing, blankets, a tow rope, jumper cables, sand or cat litter, and basic tools.

The Chicago National Weather Service office will issue daily Public Information Statements that will contain the following information:

Monday: Winter Hazards  
Tuesday: Outdoor Safety  
Wednesday: Winter Preparedness  
Thursday: Winter Fire Safety  
Friday: Winter Weather Travel Safety  
Saturday: Winter Weather Reporting

Winter weather information will be on NOAA Weather Radio broadcasts, National Weather Service websites, and National Weather Service Facebook and Twitter pages.

For more information contact your local emergency management agency or visit [www.ready.illinois.gov](http://www.ready.illinois.gov) OR [www.in.gov/dhs](http://www.in.gov/dhs).

Public Information Statement  
National Weather Service Chicago IL  
900 AM CST Mon Nov 13 2017

...This is Winter Weather Preparedness Week...

Winter storms can be dangerous. Are you weather ready? You can minimize the impact of severe winter weather by being prepared. Get the latest weather conditions and forecast for your entire route before traveling, even if it is a short trip. The best way to get the latest winter weather information directly from the National Weather Service is by visiting our website at [www.weather.gov/chicago](http://www.weather.gov/chicago) or listening to NOAA Weather Radio. You can also follow us on Facebook by searching National Weather Service Chicago and on Twitter with @NWSChicago.

The National Weather Service issues outlooks, watches, warnings, and advisories for hazardous winter weather.

The Hazardous Weather Outlook highlights potentially dangerous winter storms, high winds, and extreme cold, up to seven days in advance.

A Winter Storm Watch means severe winter weather is possible in the next few days. Check your supplies of food, fuel and medications.

A Winter Storm Warning means severe winter weather conditions are imminent within the next 12 to 24 hours. Avoid traveling and stay inside.

A Winter Weather Advisory is for winter weather that causes a significant inconvenience, especially to motorists. Use extra caution while traveling.

Blizzards are the most dangerous winter storms. Blowing and drifting snow can reduce visibility to less than one quarter mile causing you to become disoriented and make travel impossible.

Heavy accumulations of ice can bring down trees and topple utility poles and communication towers. Even small accumulations of ice can be extremely dangerous to motorists and pedestrians.

Long cold spells can cause rivers to freeze. A rise in the water level or a thaw breaks the ice into large chunks which become jammed at man-made and natural obstructions. Ice jams can act as a dam, resulting in flooding.

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900 AM CST Tue Nov 14 2017

...This is Winter Weather Preparedness Week...

The American Red Cross advises the people of Illinois and Indiana to follow winter weather safety rules.

Do you know how to protect yourself from potentially life threatening situations that arise with hazardous winter weather? For free brochures on winter weather precautions, contact your local Red Cross chapter today or visit [www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster-safety-library](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster-safety-library).

Extremely cold conditions can cause a number of health and safety concerns including frostbite and hypothermia. Taking preventive action is your best defense to protect yourself.

Dress in several layers of lightweight clothing which keeps you warmer than a single heavy coat.

Mittens provide more warmth to your hands than gloves.

Wear a hat preferably one that covers your ears.

Wear a scarf over your mouth to protect your lungs.

Wear waterproof, insulated boots to keep your feet warm and dry and to maintain your footing on ice and snow.

Frostbite occurs when skin freezes resulting in numbness and a pale white appearance to the affected area. Slowly re-warm the affected skin.

If you are out in the cold and notice dizziness, numbness, confusion, and impaired vision, you may be developing hypothermia. Prolonged exposure to the cold can lead to this life threatening condition, which causes your body temperature to fall well below normal.

To treat someone with hypothermia, call 9-1-1 and move them to a warmer place. Give the victim warm liquids rather than hot and avoid alcohol. Warm the body core first with warm blankets, not the hands and feet. This could drive cold blood quickly to the heart, resulting in heart failure.

Shoveling snow can be extremely hard work, especially for seniors. You should not shovel snow unless you are in good physical condition. Know your limits when shoveling snow. Rest frequently and pace yourself. Use a proper snow shovel and lift with your legs, not your back. If you experience chest or arm pain, stop immediately and go indoors. Seek emergency medical attention if needed.

Overexertion can cause sore muscles, falls on slippery surfaces, and most importantly, heart attacks. Consider asking for help with clearing the snow and ice off of the sidewalks, stairs and driveway.

Contact your local red cross chapter for more information on cold weather first aid, or visit [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).

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900 AM CST Wed Nov 15 2017

...This is Winter Weather Preparedness Week...

Has your car, van, or pickup truck had a vehicle checkup lately? Now is the time to make sure your automobile can survive the coming winter weather.

Check the tires, battery and brakes, along with the heating and defrosting system. Change the antifreeze, if needed, to protect the engine and radiator from freezing up in the cold temperatures that will be with us this winter.

Carry a windshield scraper, jumper cables, a small shovel, a flashlight, a blanket and additional warm clothing, drinking water, and high calorie non-perishable food.

Also update the emergency kits in your vehicles with a battery powered radio, extra batteries, a first aid kit with pocket knife, necessary medications, tow chain or rope, road salt and sand, a distress flag and emergency flares.

More information can be found at [www.ready.gov/winter-weather](http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather).

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900 AM CST Thu Nov 16 2017

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Another winter is just around the corner. Make sure to follow these tips from the state fire marshal and your local fire department to make your winter fire-safe.

If you must use a space heater, place space heaters at least three feet away from walls, furniture, and other combustible items. Be sure wiring is sufficient for operating an electrical heater. Use extension cords sparingly, especially around the holiday season.

Install and maintain your smoke detectors. A smoke detector that does not have a battery will not work and it will not save your life. A working smoke detector is your first line of defense in the event of a fire. Replace the battery at least twice each year and be sure to test it regularly. This is also a good time to change the backup battery in your NOAA Weather Radio.

If you lose heat, never light a grill or wood burner in your home. If you have a portable generator, make sure you follow all of the safety precautions and are certain that it is properly ventilated outdoors to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Install and maintain a carbon monoxide detector and make sure it also has a fresh battery.

Make sure your furnace and fireplace are inspected and maintained each year. Change or clean the furnace filters, and schedule an inspection by a qualified heating specialist. Have a professional chimney sweep service check the chimney and clean the flue.

For more information visit [www.sfm.illinois.gov](http://www.sfm.illinois.gov) or [www.in.gov/dhs/2445.htm](http://www.in.gov/dhs/2445.htm).

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900 AM CST Fri Nov 17 2017

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When a snow or ice storm is expected to affect any part of your travel route, here is an important question to ask yourself: Do I really need to make this trip? If the answer is no, then don't go. Keep in mind that the weather may be okay in your town, but hazardous winter driving conditions could exist only a few miles away.

If you must travel out of town and dangerous winter weather conditions are expected along any part of your route, make sure your gas tank is full and you have a complete winter emergency kit in your vehicle before departing. Be sure to tell your family or friends where you are going, the roads you will be taking, and your time of arrival.

Do not panic if you become stranded on the road during a winter storm. Call someone on your cell phone and let them know you are stranded. Do not try to walk to safety; stay in your vehicle. Attach a cloth to your car antenna or window to indicate you need help. Turn on the dome light and flashers to make your vehicle more noticeable.

Also, remember that even one or two inches of snowfall or light icing can create as much if not more havoc than a large snowfall event. This could be due to heavier motor vehicle traffic than during large winter storms and possibly more dangerous road and visibility conditions than perceived by drivers in these situations, even if only briefly. Drivers should be as cautious and aware in these minor winter weather events as a major winter storm.

The Department of Transportation also reminds you to be on the lookout for snow plows this winter. If the plow is coming toward you, allow plenty of room for it to pass. If you approach a snowplow from the rear, pass with care, and only when you can see the road ahead of the plow.

For more information visit [www.dot.state.il.us](http://www.dot.state.il.us) or [www.in.gov/indot](http://www.in.gov/indot) and [www.ready.gov/winter-weather](http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather).

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900 AM CST Sat Nov 18 2017

...This is Winter Weather Preparedness Week...

The key to a good winter weather forecast, warning, or advisory starts with good observations. An important component of this is the reports the National Weather Service receives from citizen observers. Help the National Weather Service by providing reports of snow, sleet, freezing rain, and ice jam flooding.

To learn how to properly measure winter precipitation, visit [www.weather.gov/chicago](http://www.weather.gov/chicago) or [www.facebook.com/nwschicago](http://www.facebook.com/nwschicago) or [www.twitter.com/nwschicago](http://www.twitter.com/nwschicago).

There is also a smartphone application that allows citizen observers to provide reports of winter precipitation to the National Severe Storms Laboratory. Visit [mping.nssl.noaa.gov](http://mping.nssl.noaa.gov) for more information.

National Weather Service Chicago has a network of volunteer ice spotters that provide observations of ice formation and extent on areas. This information is vital in the event of ice jam flooding. Visit [www.weather.gov/chicago](http://www.weather.gov/chicago) for information on becoming an ice spotter.