

Severe winter weather

Winter storms can become severe or dangerous very quickly, sometimes with little or no warning. Winter storms can whitewash urban and rural landscapes with falling snow, blizzard conditions, freezing rain and sleet. Not only can winter storms completely paralyze a large city, they can cause great chaos in areas where people and businesses are not prepared to handle such harsh conditions.



What to do

Inside

Get storm updates from The Weather Channel, weather.com your local TV or radio station, cell phone or NOAA Weather Radio.

Keep your Family Disaster Kit with you at all times. Make sure it contains bottled water, canned food, fresh batteries and warm blankets. Make sure everyone in the family knows where the kit is located.

Stay indoors.

Outside

Wear several layers of thin, loose fitting clothing. Layers will trap body heat while aiding air circulation. Coats should be hooded and tightly woven to help repel water and snow.

Wear a hat, gloves and scarf to keep from losing body heat.

Keep dry to prevent loss of body temperature.

Watch for signs of frostbite: a loss of feeling and a white, pale appearance in fingers, toes, nose or ear lobes.

Watch for signs of hypothermia; uncontrollable shivering, slow speech, memory lapses, frequent stumbling, drowsiness and exhaustion. If these symptoms occur get medical attention immediately.

4 important key alerts



Winter Storm Watch: Significant winter weather is expected, but not imminent, for the area; provides 12 to 36 hours notice of the possibility of severe winter weather.

Winter Storm Warning: A significant winter storm or hazardous winter weather is occurring, imminent or likely and a threat to life and property.

Blizzard Warning: This means that winds are at least 35 mph or greater. There is blowing snow that will frequently reduce visibility to a quarter mile or less for the duration of at least three hours. Dangerous wind chills are expected in the warning area.

Winter Weather Advisory: A significant winter storm or hazardous winter weather is occurring or imminent.