

# At-A-Glance

## Winter Storms

Winter storms can range from a moderate snow over a few hours to a blizzard with blinding, wind-driven snow that lasts for several days. Many winter storms are accompanied by dangerously low temperatures or by strong winds, icing, sleet and freezing rain. Here are some safety tips to help you prepare for winter storms.



### ***Be prepared before the winter storm strikes...***

- Before winter approaches, make sure you have:
  - Rock salt or more environmentally safe products to melt ice on walkways.
  - Sand to improve traction.
  - Snow shovels and other snow removal equipment.
- Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or other local news channels for critical information from the National Weather Service (NWS). Be alert to changing weather conditions.
- Minimize travel. If travel is necessary, keep a disaster supplies kit in your vehicle.

### **Did you know?**

Frostbite can occur within minutes of being outside during a winter storm.

For additional information on winter storms, go to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

### ***During a winter storm...***

- Stay indoors during the storm.
- Walk carefully on snowy, icy, walkways.
- Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow. Overexertion can bring on a heart attack—a major cause of death in the winter. If you must shovel snow, stretch before going outside.
- Keep dry. Change wet clothing frequently to prevent a loss of body heat. Wet clothing loses all of its insulating value and transmits heat rapidly.
- Watch for signs of frostbite. These include loss of feeling and white or pale appearance in extremities such as fingers, toes, ear lobes, and the tip of the nose. If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately.
- Watch for signs of hypothermia. These include uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness, and apparent exhaustion. If symptoms of hypothermia are detected, get the victim to a warm location, remove wet clothing, warm the center of the body first and give warm, non-alcoholic beverages if the victim is conscious. Get medical help as soon as possible.

Sources: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)



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