



# Are You **READY WISCONSIN?**

✓ Get a Kit

✓ Make a Plan

✓ Be Informed

## Winter Storms & Extreme Cold

### Know the Terms

#### Freezing Rain

Rain that freezes when it hits the ground, creating a coating of ice on roads, walkways, trees, and power lines.

#### Sleet

Rain that turns to ice pellets before reaching the ground. Sleet also causes moisture on roads to freeze and become slippery.

#### Winter Storm Watch

A winter storm is possible in your area. Tune in to NOAA Weather Radio All-Hazards, commercial radio, or television for more information.

#### Winter Storm Warning

A winter storm is occurring or will soon occur in your area.

#### Blizzard Warning

Sustained winds or frequent gusts to 35 miles per hour or greater and considerable amounts of falling or blowing snow (reducing visibility to less than a quarter mile) are expected to prevail for a period of three hours or longer.

#### Frost/Freeze Warning

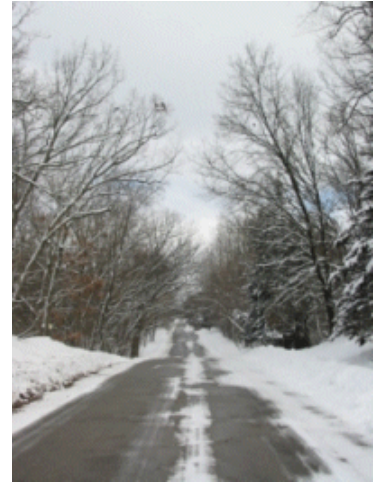
Below freezing temperatures are expected.

#### Frostbite

Damage to body tissue caused by extreme cold. A wind chill of -20° Fahrenheit could cause frostbite in just 15 minutes or less. Frostbite causes a loss of feeling and a white or pale appearance in extremities such as fingers, toes, ear tips or the tip of the nose. If symptoms are detected – Seek medical care immediately!

#### Hypothermia

A condition that develops when the body temperature drops below 95°F. It is very deadly. Warning signs include uncontrollable shivering, disorientation, slurred speech and drowsiness. Seek medical care immediately!



### Prepare Your Home & Family

- ◆ Prepare for possible isolation in your home by having sufficient heating fuel. For example, store a good supply of dry, seasoned wood for your fireplace or wood-burning stove.
- ◆ Keep fire extinguishers on hand, and make sure everyone in your house knows how to use them.
- ◆ Learn how to shut off water valves (in case a pipe bursts).
- ◆ Know ahead of time what you should do to help elderly or disabled friends, neighbors or employees.

### Prepare a Car Kit

- ◆ shovel & windshield scraper
- ◆ flashlight & extra batteries
- ◆ water & snack food
- ◆ matches
- ◆ blankets, extra hats, socks and mittens
- ◆ first aid kit with pocket knife
- ◆ booster cables & tow chain or rope
- ◆ sand or kitty litter
- ◆ emergency flares
- ◆ fluorescent distress flag

➤ **More on back of page**



# Are You **READY WISCONSIN?**

✓ Get a Kit

✓ Make a Plan

✓ Be Informed

## Winter Storms & Extreme Cold

### Dress for the Weather

- ◆ Wear several layers of loose fitting, lightweight, warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing. The outer garments should be tightly woven and water repellent.
- ◆ Wear mittens, which are warmer than gloves.
- ◆ Wear a hat.
- ◆ Cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs.

### During a Winter Storm

#### If You Are Driving

Drive only if it is absolutely necessary. If you must drive, consider the following:

- ◆ Travel in the day, don't travel alone, and keep others informed of your schedule.
- ◆ Stay on main roads; avoid back road shortcuts.
- ◆ If a blizzard traps you in the car:
  - ◇ Pull off the highway. Turn on hazard lights and hang a distress flag from the radio antenna or window.
  - ◇ Remain in your vehicle where rescuers are most likely to find you.
  - ◇ Run the engine and heater about 10 minutes each hour to keep warm. When the engine is running, open a downwind window slightly for ventilation and periodically clear snow from the exhaust pipe. This will protect you from possible carbon monoxide poisoning.
  - ◇ Exercise to maintain body heat, but avoid overexertion. In extreme cold, use road maps, seat covers, and floor mats for insulation. Huddle with passengers and use your coat for a blanket.
  - ◇ Take turns sleeping. One person should be awake at all times to look for rescue crews.
  - ◇ Drink fluids to avoid dehydration.

- ◇ Be careful not to waste battery power. Balance electrical energy needs - the use of lights, heat, and radio - with supply.
- ◇ Turn on the inside light at night so work crews or rescuers can see you.
- ◇ If stranded in a remote area, stomp large block letters in an open area spelling out HELP or SOS and line with rocks or tree limbs to attract the attention of rescue personnel who may be surveying the area by airplane.
- ◇ Leave the car and proceed on foot - if necessary - once the blizzard passes.

#### If You Are Outdoors

- ◆ Overexertion is dangerous. Cold weather puts an added strain on the heart. Unaccustomed exercise such as shoveling snow or pushing a car can bring on a heart attack or make an existing medical condition worse.
- ◆ Cover your mouth. Protect your lungs from extremely cold air by covering your mouth when outdoors. Try not to speak unless absolutely necessary.
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ If symptoms of hypothermia are detected:
  - ◇ get the victim to a warm location
  - ◇ remove wet clothing
  - ◇ put the person in dry clothing and wrap their entire body in a blanket
  - ◇ warm the center of the body first
  - ◇ give warm, non-alcoholic or non-caffeinated beverages if the victim is conscious
  - ◇ get medical help as soon as possible.