

PREPARING FOR Winter Weather LIKE A PRO

Preparation is a crucial component of safety. In a year with ample crises, our nation has learned the imperative nature of preparation and how a little strategizing goes a long way. Placing preparation at the forefront of crisis management can help minimize the damages of emergency situations.

The winter season has its fair share of hazardous scenarios and hosts many chilling threats, such as extreme temperatures, power outages, slick surfaces, excess time indoors with your children (think Disney's "Let It Go" replaying indefinitely), and more. Take the lessons 2020 has revealed and apply them to your home this winter—you will be thankful you thought ahead!

Use this guide as a reference in navigating the "winterization" of the outside and inside of your home—remember, staying inside also comes with risks and does not guarantee safety.

Electric companies act quickly on power outages; however, this work can take time. It is wise to have **food on hand that does not need refrigeration**—the bread and milk you panic bought can only last so long.



Keep an accessible, up-to-date **emergency kit** that includes useful items (such as battery-operated flashlights and a first aid kit).



"Winterize" your home—install **weather stripping, insulation, and storm windows.**



Test smoke detector batteries monthly, and replace them twice a year. Have a plan of action in mind—identify escape routes for all members of the household. In case of fire, exit the house immediately and call 911.

Have an **emergency kit in your car** as well. According to <https://www.ready.gov/car>, here are some items to include:

- Jumper cables
- Flares or reflective triangle
- Ice scraper
- Car cell phone charger
- Blanket
- Map
- Cat litter or sand (for better tire traction)



Keep cat litter, sand, or salt on hand to sprinkle on **icy outdoor walkways**. This precaution is essential to preventing injuries—and embarrassing "trying not to fall" jigs.

Obtained from: <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/features/winterweather/index.html>

Make sure you have ample water stored as well. According to <https://www.fema.gov/txt/library/f&web.txt>, a rule of thumb is to calculate the **amount of water you and your family would drink in 2 weeks** and have that put aside.



When temperatures drop, heating systems can provide warmth and comfort to your living space; however, there are risks associated with incorrect usage. Make sure to have your **heating system(s) serviced** professionally at the start of the season.

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas that can be deadly. In fact, more than 430 people die in the United States from accidental CO poison annually. To prevent potential injury or death, it is highly recommended to—



- Keep grills, camp stoves, and generators out of indoor areas (at least 20 feet from the house).
- **Install a CO detector and routinely check batteries.**
- Exit your house immediately if your CO detector alarm sounds and call 911.

Obtained from: <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/features/winterweather/index.html>

Know the dangers of power lines—**if lines fall, call 911 immediately, and stay away**—do not touch.

Prepare your young ones. **Teach your children to enjoy winter weather safely.** For starters, you can share with them the following tips:

- Use the buddy system;
- Do not build snow forts without adult supervision—although fun to build, the snow can collapse and cause suffocation;
- Take extra caution when crossing roads—it may be harder for the driver to see you and stop for you;
- For this same reason, do not sled near roads (and always sled lying on your stomach to avoid potential injuries);
- Do not assume it is safe to walk on a frozen lake or pond—falling through the ice can quickly occur and be deadly.

Obtained from: https://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/winter_safety