



# OREGON OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

## Winter Storm Safety and Preparedness

### *Preparing for a winter storm*

- ✓ Know the terms:
  - Winter Weather Advisory: Winter weather conditions are expected to cause significant inconveniences and may be hazardous, use caution
  - Winter Storm Watch: Winter storm conditions are possible within the next 36 to 48 hours. People should review winter storm plans, check supplies, and stay informed
  - Winter Storm Warning: Life threatening, severe winter conditions have begun or will begin within 24 hours. Take precautions immediately.
- ✓ Drive safely during hazardous conditions. The leading cause of death from a winter storm is vehicle accidents caused by ice and snow. Use these [winter travel tips](#) from ODOT.
- ✓ Have an emergency kit with necessary supplies for up to 2 weeks
- ✓ Have a family plan with meeting places and multiple communication plans
  - Designate an out of state contact. Local phone lines will likely be bogged down but a long distance call may go through.
- ✓ Have a specific plan if you are unable to drive to work
  - Telework
  - Walk
- ✓ Winterize your vehicle
  - Check levels of antifreeze
  - Do not let your gas fall below ½ a tank in case you get stranded in traffic
  - Install winter tires or keep chains in your vehicle.
- ✓ Winterize your home
  - Insulate walls and attics to keep heat in (this will also lower your heating bill)
  - Have chimneys and heating equipment inspected before using
- ✓ If using alternate heat sources for your home, never use burning devices inside a home, garage, basement, crawlspace or any partially enclosed area. Keep these devices at least 20 feet from doors, windows, and vents.
  - Know how to shut off water valves in case a pipe bursts
  - Keep snow off the roof or have a contractor check the structural integrity to bear weight
- ✓ ***During a winter storm***
- ✓ Stay indoors unless required to go outside
  - Walk carefully on icy/snowy walkways
  - Use rock salt to melt ice
  - Wear layered dry clothing
- ✓ Bring pets inside
- ✓ Listen to weather and emergency updates on the TV, radio etc.

- ✓ Know the signs of frostbite in extremities
  - Loss of feeling
  - White/pale in appearance
  - Cover affected area and seek medical attention immediately
    - DO NOT RUB
- ✓ Know the signs of hypothermia
  - Uncontrollable shivering
  - Memory loss/disorientation
  - Drowsiness/exhaustion
  - If body temperature is below 95 seek medical attention immediately
    - Remove wet clothing, wrap in blankets, drink warm non-alcoholic beverages
- ✓ Conserve fuel
  - Keep residence cooler than usual
  - Cut off heating to unused/rarely used areas
- ✓ If you become trapped in your vehicle
  - Pull off to a safe location and turn on hazards
  - Remain in your vehicle unless better shelter is nearby (clearly visible)
  - Run heater for 10 minutes every hour
    - While engine is running open a downwind window slightly for ventilation
    - Periodically clear exhaust pipe of snow
  - Eat regularly and drink fluids but avoid caffeine and alcohol
  - Make sure you are visible to rescuers
    - Turn on inside light at night
    - If in a remote area use rocks or tree limbs to spell out SOS or HELP
  - If necessary abandon the vehicle after the blizzard passes