

Prepare for Winter Weather

As a reminder, below is a list of preparedness actions that you can take to lessen the impacts of severe winter weather:

- During a winter storm, stay off the roads as much as possible and only drive when absolutely necessary. Always give snowplows and responders the right of way.
- If you must travel, know road conditions before you leave home. View the latest road and traffic conditions at 511virginia.org or by calling 511 or viewing the 511 Virginia mobile app.
- Never use a generator, grill, camp stove or gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal burning device inside your home, garage, basement, crawlspace or any other partially enclosed area.
- Snow shoveling is a known trigger for heart attacks. Always avoid overexertion when shoveling.
- When severe weather occurs, plan to check on elderly or disabled neighbors and relatives.
- Protect yourself from Frostbite. Hands, feet, and face are the most commonly affected areas so wear a hat, mittens (which are warmer than gloves) and cover your mouth with a scarf to reduce heat loss.
- Keep dry. Change out of wet clothing frequently to prevent a loss of body heat.
- Wear several layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing rather than one layer or heavy clothing.
- **Prepare your home**
 - Make sure your home is properly insulated
 - Check the weather stripping around your windows and doors
 - Learn how to shut off water valves in case a pipe burst
 - Have additional heat sources on hand in case of a power outages
 - Keep a fire extinguisher accessible
 - Replace the batteries in your carbon monoxide detector annually
 - In the case of high winds, secure loose items around your property and trim any branches that could threaten your home
- **Prepare your car**
 - Batteries lose power as temperatures drop, be sure to have yours tested
 - Check your car's antifreeze level
 - Have your radiator system serviced
 - Replace your car's windshield wiper fluid with a wintertime mix
 - Proactively replace your car's worn tires and wiper blades
 - To help with visibility, clean off your car entirely – including your trunk, roof, windows and headlights
- **Please heed warnings to avoid travel. If you absolutely have to be on the roadway, prepare your vehicle and have a kit for you and your passengers. This could include items such as:**
 - Blankets
 - Drinking water and snacks for everyone in the car, including pets
 - Boots
 - Basic first-aid kit
 - Warm coat and insulating layers (sweatpants, gloves, hat, socks,)
 - Rags, paper towels or pre-moistened wipes
 - Basic set of tools
 - Car emergency warning devices such as road flares or reflectors
 - Ice scraper/snow brush
 - Jumper cables/jump pack

- Fire extinguisher
- Cash
- Items for children such as diapers, baby wipes, toys, etc.
- Flashlight, with extra batteries
- Hand warmers
- Paper map
- Portable smartphone power bank
- Extra medication
- Garbage bags
- Traction aid such as sand, salt or non-clumping cat litter
- Tarp, raincoat and gloves
- Shovel