

## WINTER STORMS

Winter storms can include high winds, freezing rain, sleet, heavy snowfall, and extreme cold. Severe winter storms can cause blocked roads, downed power lines and trees, power outages, and transportation accidents. In most cases, approaching winter storms are forecasted a day or two (or more) in advance. If there is a possibility that you may be staying in your home for several days, you need to make sure you have plenty of supplies and medicines.

### Before a Winter Storm:

- Ensure you have rock salt on hand to melt ice on walkways and sand to generate temporary traction. Have a snow shovel or other snow removal equipment on hand.
- Make sure your emergency kit is stocked. Ensure you have an emergency kit in your car.
- Make sure your car's fuel tank is full.
- Insulate walls and attic.
- Keep pipes from freezing by wrapping them in insulation or layers of newspaper, then cover with plastic to keep out moisture.
- Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows.
- Bring pets/companion animals inside during winter weather. Move other animals or livestock to sheltered areas with non-frozen drinking water.

### During a Winter Storm:

- Stay inside and only travel if absolutely necessary.
- If you must go outside, dress in layers and walk carefully on snowy or icy walkways.
- If you are using alternative heat, follow fire safety guideline and ensure proper ventilation.
- Close off any unused rooms. Put towels at the base of doors.
- If the pipes freeze, remove any insulation or layers of newspapers and wrap pipes in rags. Completely open all faucets and pour hot water over the pipes, starting where they were most exposed to the cold (or where the cold was most likely to penetrate).
- Eat nutritious foods and drink plenty of fluids to provide energy and stay hydrated.

*(continued)*

## After a Winter Storm:

- Assist neighbors who may need assistance, such as the elderly, people with infants, or those with access and functional needs.
- Remove ice and snow from tree limbs, roof, and other structures.
- When shoveling snow, avoid overexertion. Colder temperatures add strain to the heart, and can make strenuous activity feel less tiring. Be attentive to signs of dehydration.
- When outdoors, wear layers of warm, loose-fitting, lightweight clothing. Layers can be removed to prevent chill.
- Watch for signs of frostbite, such as loss of feeling and a pale appearance in fingers, toes, nose and earlobes. If these signs are present, seek immediate medical attention.
- Watch for signs of hypothermia, including uncontrollable shivering, slow or slurred speech, exhaustion, and stumbling. If these are detected, get to a warm location, remove wet clothing and drink warm, non-alcoholic beverages. Seek medical attention immediately.