

Public Information Statement
National Weather Service Albany NY
800 AM EDT Mon Oct 30 2017

...October 29 To November 4 is Winter Weather Awareness Week in New York and New England...

Today we explore steps you can take to mitigate the effects of our harsh winter weather.

Destructive ice storms...such as the December 2008 storm...can bring down trees and power lines leaving communities without power for days. Wet snow, such as during the October storm of 2011, can also bring down trees and power lines. If your power is out, never run a generator indoors and make sure any alternative heating sources such as a fire place or kerosene heater are well ventilated to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.

Winter is the most dangerous time of the year for drivers. Nearly three out of every four winter weather related deaths occur on roadways. If roads are snow covered or icy, slow down and drive carefully. Clear your car of snow and ice before you drive. Make sure all windows, headlights and tail lights are clear.

The cold weather puts an added strain on your car, so we suggest that you get your vehicle in good mechanical condition now. Check your tires, brakes, batteries, windshield wipers, windshield fluid, and antifreeze. If your car is in good working order, there is less chance it will fail during harsh winter weather.

Consider keeping a winter storm survival kit in your car which includes a blanket, first aid kit, flashlight with fresh batteries, shovel, a sack of sand or cat litter, booster cables, tow strap, ice scraper and brush, and some high energy non-perishable food.

If planning travel during a winter storm, call ahead to your destination to tell someone you are on your way. Try not to travel alone. If you get stuck in your car during a winter storm, stay there, and tie a brightly colored cloth to the antenna. Do not attempt to walk to safety unless you can clearly see the shelter you wish to reach.

You are more likely to be rescued from your vehicle than from a barn or other uninhabited, out of the way building. While waiting for help, run the cars motor and heater just enough to keep from becoming unreasonably cold. Make sure to open a window slightly, and clear snow from the cars tailpipe. This will help prevent carbon monoxide poisoning from the exhaust.

Dress warmly for the cold weather. Several layers of loose fitting clothing are better than one tight fitting garment. Mittens are warmer than gloves. Do not forget your hat since your body's greatest heat loss occurs from your head. Wind chill, the combination of cold temperatures and wind, increases the danger of frostbite or hypothermia.

Be especially cautious when venturing out onto an ice covered body of water. An ice thickness of at least four inches is recommended to support a person. Snowmobiles and ATVs need at least six inches of ice, while cars and light trucks require at least eight to 12 inches. Factors which can be used to assess the strength of the ice include the ice appearance, ice thickness, daily temperature, snow cover and distribution of the load on the ice.

For weather and hydrologic information on the go, simply go to mobile.weather.gov and provide your location or zip code.

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