

...Winter Weather Preparedness Week Across New England And New York...
...Today's Topic...Winter Weather Warnings And Terminology...

All of the New England states as well as the state of New York, in partnership with the National Weather Service offices in these respective states, have designated this week as Winter Weather Preparedness Week.

If you have not already done so, now is the time to get yourself and your property prepared for the winter season.

During the winter season, your National Weather Service office at Burlington maintains a 24 hour weather watch. Various types of messages will be issued throughout the season informing you of impending hazardous winter weather and how to prepare for it.

It is important that you understand the terminology used so that you can quickly take appropriate action necessary to save lives and minimize damage to property.

A Hazardous Weather Outlook is generally issued up to 7 days in advance of an approaching winter storm when forecasters believe there is a strong possibility of winter storm conditions.

A Winter Storm Watch means conditions are favorable for the development of hazardous winter weather. Weather conditions that would prompt the issuance of a watch include the possibility of a blizzard, snow accumulating 7 or more inches, damaging accumulations of ice such as the ice storm of January 1998, or a combination of these elements. Winter Storm Watches are typically issued 12 to 48 hours before the arrival of the winter storm.

When a Winter Storm Warning is issued, there is a high probability that hazardous winter weather such as snow, sleet, freezing rain, or a combination of these elements is imminent or is already in progress. An Ice Storm Warning is issued for expected ice accumulation of a half inch or greater. These warnings are generally issued 12 to 24 hours before the winter storm arrives.

A Blizzard Warning will be issued for only the most severe winter weather conditions. In a blizzard, heavy snow and winds of at least 35 miles an hour combine to create visibilities at or below one quarter of a mile in falling, blowing, and drifting snow, persisting for at least 3 hours.

A Snow Squall Warning will be issued when quarter mile or lower visibility is expected with brief heavy snow and gusty winds, producing hazardous conditions for motorists.

An Extreme Cold Warning is issued when temperature or apparent temperature is expected to meet or exceed minus 30 degrees. Rapid onset of hypothermia or

frostbite and impacts to electrical equipment are possible in these conditions.

A High Wind Warning will be issued for the occurrence of persistent winds of 40 miles an hour or greater or frequent gusts in excess of 58 miles an hour.

A Winter Weather Advisory is issued for 4 or more inches of snow or for significant icing on exposed surfaces such as roads, sidewalks, power lines, and trees to pose a hazard, but fall short of warning criteria. Specific winter type advisories such as a Lake Effect Snow Advisory may be issued as well.

A Cold Weather Advisory is issued when temperature or apparent temperature is expected to range between 20 and 29 degrees below zero. At these temperatures exposed flesh can experience frostbite in less than 30 minutes.

A Wind Advisory will be issued for the occurrence of persistent winds between 31 and 39 miles an hour, or frequent gusts in excess of 45 miles an hour.

Winter can be a very dangerous time of year. The National Weather Service at Burlington will keep you up-to-date on fast changing weather conditions. So listen to NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards often for the latest weather information. Also, check the latest forecasts, warnings, and more at weather.gov, then click on Vermont.