



News Release

WISCONSIN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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Winter Weather Dangers

Important safety tips for the days ahead

(MADISON) – Winter is giving Wisconsin a big one-two punch of snow and cold over the next few days. Here's the latest information on weather conditions and tips to keep you and your family safe.

Weather

The National Weather Service (NWS) has issued a Winter Storm Warning north of a line from Minneapolis to Hudson and Ladysmith, including Price and Vilas Counties, until 6 am Thursday. Snow totals of 12-18 inches are forecast with some areas near Duluth receiving two to three feet.

NWS has also issued a Winter Weather Advisory for counties south of that line until 6 am Thursday. Forecasters say 2-4 inches of snow is possible along with freezing rain in western and north-central Wisconsin. ¼ to ½ inch of ice accumulation is possible in that area.

Bitterly cold air will move in after the storm creating dangerously cold wind chills Friday continuing into next week with lows dipping below zero.

On the road

Slippery roads due to snow, freezing drizzle, and freezing of wet pavement is possible.

Check road conditions by visiting www.511wi.gov or call 511

Have at least a half tank of gas in your car in case you are stranded or stuck and need to run your heater. When running the engine, make sure you crack a window open to prevent

carbon monoxide poisoning.

Have a winter emergency kit. Keep a kit in your vehicle with candles and matches, a flashlight, pocket knife, snacks, a cell phone adapter, a blanket and extra clothing. For a complete list and a chance to win a kit, go to <http://ReadyWisconsin.wi.gov>

Cold

With wind chills of -30 possible starting Friday and continuing next week, a reminder that frostbite can happen after just 30 minutes exposure to those conditions. Symptoms include a loss of feeling and a white or pale appearance in fingers, toes, ear tips and tip of the nose. Limit your time outside. If you see these signs, seek medical care immediately.

Hypothermia is also a danger in these conditions. That is when your body temperature drops below 95°F. Warning signs include uncontrollable shivering, disorientation, slurred speech and drowsiness. Again, limit your outdoor activity and seek medical care if you detect these symptoms.

Carbon Monoxide Danger

Carbon monoxide is the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control. More than 20,000 people visit the emergency room and nearly 500 are killed each year from carbon monoxide poisoning. Last Saturday, eight people in Janesville were treated for carbon monoxide poisoning.

Make sure you have working CO detectors. All homes and duplexes in Wisconsin are required to have CO detectors on every level including the basement, but not the attic or storage areas.

Have your furnace or wood-burning stove inspected annually to make sure it is structurally and functionally sound and vents properly to the outside of your home.

Never run a gasoline or propane heater or a grill (gas or charcoal) inside your home or an unventilated garage. Any heating system that burns fuel will produce carbon monoxide. Use a battery-powered detector where you have fuel burning devices but no electric outlets, such as in tents, cabins, RVs, and boats with enclosed cabins.

Never run a car in an enclosed space. If a vehicle is running, you must have a door open to the outside.

Generators should be run a safe distance from the home. Never run a generator in the home or garage, or right next to windows or doors.

Breathing carbon monoxide displaces the oxygen in the blood and can cause death within minutes at high levels. Symptoms of overexposure to carbon monoxide are often mistaken for the flu and include headaches, fatigue, dizziness, shortness of breath/chest pain, nausea/vomiting, and confusion. If you experience any of these symptoms, or your carbon monoxide detector sounds an alarm, head outside immediately for fresh air and call 911.

Power Outages

With the combination of snow, freezing rain and wind, conditions are ripe for downed power lines.

If you see a downed line, stay away even if they don't spark or hum. Stay away from anything that is touching the line such as a tree, fence or vehicle. Call 911 to report the line. Do not touch someone being shocked by a downed line.

If the vehicle you are driving or riding in comes in contact with a power line, stay inside until rescue crews say it is safe to leave. Do not touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time.

For additional safety tips, visit <http://ReadyWisconsin.wi.gov>. You can also check out Midwest road conditions and airport delays. Follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/ReadyWisconsin) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/ReadyWisconsin).

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