



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ADVISES NEW
YORKERS TO PREPARE FOR SNOW STORM**

New York City winters, which often bring extreme cold, heavy snow, ice, sleet and freezing rain, can pose serious hazards. It's important to prepare for winter weather related dangers. There are several steps you can take to stay safe before, during and after winter storms.

WINTER WEATHER SAFETY TIPS:

Tips for Staying Warm:

- Wear a hat, hood or scarf, as most heat is lost through the head.
- Wear layers, as they provide better insulation and warmth.
- Keep fingertips, earlobes and noses covered if you go outside.
- Keep clothing dry; if a layer becomes wet, remove it.

What to Do Before a Winter Storm Strikes:

- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio and your local radio and TV stations for updated storm information. Know what winter storm watches and warnings mean.
- Check on relatives, friends, and neighbors who may need assistance preparing for a storm.
- Be alert to changing weather conditions and avoid unnecessary travel.
- Let faucets drip a little to help prevent freezing.
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

Snow Removal Safety Tips:

- Stretch before you go out. If you go out to shovel snow, do a few stretching exercises to warm up your body. This may prevent injury.
- Cover your mouth. Protect your lungs from extremely cold air by covering your mouth when outdoors.
- Avoid overexertion. Cold weather puts an added strain on the heart. Unfamiliar exercise, such as shoveling snow or pushing a car, can bring on a heart attack or make other medical conditions worse. Take frequent rest breaks, and drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.
- Keep dry. Change wet clothes frequently to prevent a loss of body heat. Wet clothing loses all of its insulating value and transmits heat rapidly.

- Stay safe. Walk carefully on snowy or icy sidewalks. If using a snow blower, NEVER use your hands to unclog the machine.
- Maintain an awareness of utilities when shoveling snow. Do not cover fire hydrants with snow when clearing sidewalks and driveways. Do not shovel snow into manholes and catch basins.
- Offer to help individuals who require special assistance, including seniors and people with disabilities.

Clearing Snow and Dangling Ice from Roofs:

- Snow and ice that collect on roofs become heavy and cause damage to buildings.
- Remove leaves and debris from roof drains to prevent water from collecting.
- In addition to cleaning out gutters, clear snow from roofs and drains.
- Flat roofs require special attention. Snow and water should be removed with drainage systems or manually.

If You Must Drive a Vehicle:

- Avoid traveling alone, but if you do so, let someone know your destination, route and when you expect to arrive.
- Listen to the radio for the latest road conditions.
- Use major streets or highways for travel whenever possible; these roadways will be cleared first.
- Drive slowly. Posted speed limits are for ideal weather conditions. Vehicles take longer to stop on snow and ice than on dry pavement.
- If you skid, steer in the direction you want the car to go and straighten the wheel when the car moves in the desired direction.
- Know your vehicle's braking system. Vehicles with antilock brakes require a different braking technique than vehicles without antilock brakes in icy or snowy conditions.
- Try to keep your vehicle's gas tank as full as possible

For more winter weather safety tips, visit www.nyc.gov/oem or call 311.

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