



NEW YORK CITY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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BLIZZARD WARNING ISSUED FOR THE NEW YORK CITY AREA

A powerful nor'easter is bringing blizzard like conditions to the New York City area. The Office of Emergency Management has activated its Emergency Operations Center and will continue to closely monitor this situation. OEM advises New Yorkers to stay tuned to television and radio news broadcasts for further information and updates as this situation develops.

The system is expected to move in a northeasterly direction, bringing with it the possibility of heavy snowfall, gusty winds, and above-normal tides. Temperatures in New York City are forecasted to sink below the freezing point, snowfall accumulations of between twelve (12) and eighteen (18) inches are likely.

John Odermatt, Commissioner of the New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM) urged all New Yorkers to closely track the progress of this system, and to take all precautions to prepare themselves for the strong possibility of icy roads, gusty winds, near blizzard like conditions, and coastal flooding. "The present forecast does call for significant snowfall, and this storm system has the potential to bring heavy winds, freezing temperatures, and above-normal tides to the New York City area starting early Monday morning, February 17, 2003," Commissioner Odermatt said. "I urge all New Yorkers to plan early, with the President's Day Holiday and most businesses and schools closed, I recommend commuters take those steps necessary to protect their families and property from the hazards associated with winter storms of this type."

In his remarks, Commissioner Odermatt warned New Yorkers to dress warmly and to avoid over-exertion while shoveling heavy snow. He further stressed that motorists should proceed with caution, and be aware of the possibility of icy roads and blizzard-like conditions.

To better protect themselves from some of the many hazards associated with severe winter weather, New Yorkers should:

- Use public transportation.
- Don't Drive.



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- Dress warmly, even if going outside for just a few minutes. Be sure to wear gloves, a snug-fitting hat, and insulated boots.
- Avoid over-exertion while shoveling heavy or wet snow. Take frequent breaks in a warm location.
- Use snow blowers and other mechanical snow-removal machinery with great care, and in accordance with all manufacturers' specifications.
- Be aware of the danger of frostbite, and learn how to identify the signs of its onset. Keep in mind that frostbite has a tendency to affect exposed extremities (ears, fingers, toes, the nose) before other portions of the body.
- Check on relatives and neighbors that may be elderly or have special needs.

Those seeking additional information on winter weather safety tips can visit OEM's website at www.nyc.gov/oem <<http://www.nyc.gov/oem>>.