

For Immediate Release
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NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFERS PREPAREDNESS TIPS FOR NEW YORKERS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

December 5, 2022 – As New York City proceeds into the full swing of the holiday season, the New York City Emergency Management Department wants to wish New Yorkers happy and safe holidays! As everyone begins to gather and celebrate this festive month, we want to remind New Yorkers to prepare themselves and their families for emergencies to stay safe during the holiday season.

Whether you are lighting up your home with holiday decorations, burning winter-themed scented candles, or have the grueling task of shoveling snow we want you to remember to be safe so you and your family can have the best celebrations possible. Here are some tips to help you prepare for the holiday season.

Fire Safety Tips

- Space heaters need space. Keep space heaters at least 3 ft. from bedding, curtains, and other materials, and always plug your heater directly into the wall.
- Never overload outlets and don't rely on extension cords too heavily.
- Never place an electric blanket on a baby, small child, or anyone who cannot turn off/remove the blanket on their own.
- An operable smoke alarm cuts your chances of dying nearly in half.
- Keep non-synthetic Christmas trees watered and away from heat sources.
- Turn off Christmas tree lights overnight.
- Do not leave burning candles unattended
- Do not use oven to heat apartments.

Prepare for Power Outages

- To prepare for a possible power outage, charge cell phone batteries, gather supplies, and turn your refrigerator and freezer to a colder setting. If you lose power, items that need refrigeration will stay cooler for longer.

- If your power goes out, disconnect or turn off appliances that would otherwise turn on automatically when service is restored. If several appliances start up at once, the electric circuits may overload.
- Make sure your flashlights and any battery-operated radios or televisions are working. Keep extra batteries.
- If you lose power and have a disability, access and functional needs or use life-sustaining equipment (LSE) and need immediate assistance, dial 911.
- Do not use generators indoors.

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 snowblower, *never* use your hands to unclog the machine.
- Maintain an awareness of utilities while 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.

For more safety tips, visit [NYC.gov/SevereWeather](https://nyc.gov/severeweather). Before and during an emergency, the City will send emergency alerts and updates to New Yorkers through various channels including Notify NYC, the City's free emergency notification system. Through Notify NYC, New Yorkers can receive phone calls, text messages, and/or emails alerts about traffic and transit disruptions and other emergencies. Sign up for Notify NYC to receive free emergency alerts and updates in your preferred language by visiting [NYC.gov/NotifyNYC](https://nyc.gov/notifynyc), calling 311 (212-639-9675 for Video Relay Service, or TTY: 212-504-4115), following @NotifyNYC on Twitter, or getting the free Notify NYC mobile application for your Apple or Android device.



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