

For Immediate Release
#19-18

**NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ISSUES HAZARDOUS TRAVEL ADVISORY
FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21**

Winter Storm Warning in effect from midnight through early Thursday morning

Alternate Side Parking Regulations are suspended Wednesday, March 21 and Thursday, March 22; parking meters remain in effect

March 20, 2018 – The New York City Emergency Management Department today issued a hazardous travel advisory for Wednesday, March 21. The National Weather Service has issued a Winter Storm Warning for New York City in effect from midnight through 8 a.m. Thursday, March 22. According to the National Weather Service, a nor'easter is expected to bring a wintry mix of rain, sleet, and snow to the city. Precipitation begins as a mix of rain, sleet, and snow Tuesday evening and will transition to snow overnight into Wednesday. Snow will become steadier early Wednesday during the morning commute. The heaviest period of snow is forecast for Wednesday afternoon through Wednesday night. Snow is expected to end early Thursday morning. The National Weather Service currently predicts a total of more than 6 inches of snow, with the potential for up to between 12 and 16 inches possible.

High winds are also in the forecast, with sustained winds 20 mph to 30 mph, and gusts up to 45 mph. The strongest winds are expected throughout the day on Wednesday. High winds continue Thursday, before subsiding early Friday morning. Temperatures Wednesday are forecast to be around freezing, with wind chill values between 15 and 20 degrees during the day, and between 20 and 25 degrees late Wednesday. Temperatures increase into the low forties on Thursday.

A Winter Storm Warning for snow means severe winter weather conditions will make travel hazardous. Commuters are advised to use mass transit where possible. If you must travel, keep an extra flashlight, food, and water in your vehicle in case of an emergency, and exercise extreme caution when driving, walking or biking.

NYC Emergency Management also advises residents living in coastal areas to prepare for the potential for coastal flooding on Wednesday. The National Weather Service has issued a Coastal Flood Advisory for the shorelines of Staten Island, Brooklyn and southern Queens in effect from 10 a.m. through 2 p.m. Wednesday. Localized minor to moderate coastal flooding is possible with the high tide cycles on Wednesday. New Yorkers living in coastal areas are advised to prepare as some roads and low-lying property may experience shallow flooding.

“The calendar may say spring, but winter is sticking around a little longer, as the fourth nor'easter in two weeks is forecast to bring snow that will make travel extremely hazardous,” said **NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito**. “New Yorkers should take this storm seriously. If you have to go out, use mass transit where possible and allow for extra travel time.”

NYC Emergency Management

- NYC Emergency Management is working closely with the National Weather Service to monitor the storm's track to determine the impacts to New York City.
- NYC Emergency Management will activate the City's Emergency Operations Center on Wednesday to coordinate the City's response to the storm.
- NYC Emergency Management is hosting daily interagency conference calls with City and state agencies and public and private partners to coordinate the City's preparations for the storm.

Department of Sanitation

- The NYC Department of Sanitation is pre-deploying 693 salt spreaders. DSNY will activate PlowNYC and will dispatch nearly 1600 plows when more than two inches of snow accumulates, with additional plows available if necessary.
- DSNY will assign 2,400 workers per shift to 12-hour shifts.
- DSNY has 227,000 tons of rock salt on hand.
- Normal garbage/recycling collections for Wednesday, March 21 may be delayed depending on snowfall amounts.

Department of Transportation

- DOT will deploy more than 430 staffers Citywide with 389 pieces of equipment to address conditions. DOT will assist DSNY with snow removal starting Wednesday, March 21, at 7:00 a.m.
- DOT's Bridges Division will deploy anti-icing crews to East River bridges.
- DOT's Arterial, Parking and Citywide Concrete Units, will pre-treat and monitor pedestrian overpasses, muni lots and step streets.
- Crews from JC Decaux are pre-treating bus shelters.
- Alternate Side Parking Regulations are suspended for Wednesday, March 21, and Thursday March 22, to facilitate snow removal operations. Payment at parking meters will remain in effect throughout the city.
- The Staten Island Ferry is operating on a regular schedule and crews are monitoring weather conditions. Passengers should allow extra travel time on Wednesday and Thursday, in the event of weather-related delays. Passengers are encouraged to monitor our Facebook page ([fb.com/statenislandferry](https://www.facebook.com/statenislandferry)) and sign up for email alerts at nyc.gov/siferry for the most up to date information. Crews will pre-treat and clear walkways at the Staten Island Ferry terminals.

Economic Development Corporation

- NYC Ferry service is currently operating on a normal schedule; however, winter storm conditions may affect service. Riders should prepare for potential weather-related delays. Real-time service changes will be posted online at www.ferry.nyc and announced via social media, app notifications, and email.

Department of Buildings

- DOB issued a weather advisory reminding property owners, contractors and crane operators to take precautionary measures and secure their construction sites, buildings, and equipment during high winds.
- The department will be performing random spot-check inspections of construction sites around the City. If sites are not secured, the department will take immediate enforcement action — issuing violations and Stop Work Orders, where necessary.

To safeguard construction sites, builders, contractors, and developers should take all precautionary measures including but not limited to the following:

- Tie down and secure material and loose debris at construction sites.
- Cover electrical equipment from exposure to the weather.
- Secure netting, scaffolding, and sidewalk sheds.
- Clear icicles and vulnerable snow masses from sidewalk sheds, and supported and suspended scaffolds.
- Clear roofs, overhangs and gutters of melting snow and ice.
- Brace and secure construction fences.
- Call 911 if there is an emergency on a construction site.

To secure a building, property owners should take all precautionary measures including but not limited to the following:

- Bring inside loose, lightweight objects such as lawn furniture, potted plants, garbage cans, garden tools, and toys.
- Anchor objects that would be unsafe outside, such as gas grills, or propane tanks.
- Secure and clear roofs, awnings, umbrellas, and overhangs of melting snow and ice.
- Ensure gutters are clear of debris to allow drainage.
- Secure retractable awnings.

NYC Parks

- Parks will support the DSNY street plowing operation, lending 44 plows with operators.
- Parks will activate 1,300 staff, 160 plow vehicles, 167 salt spreaders, 257 snow blowers and brushes, and other equipment for snow removal on park perimeters.

Department of Social Services

A Code Blue Weather Emergency notice is issued when the temperature is forecast to drop to 32 degrees Fahrenheit or less between 4 p.m. and 8 a.m., including National Weather Service calculations for wind chill values. No one who is homeless and seeking shelter in New York City during a Code Blue will be denied. Should you see an individual who appears to be homeless and in need out in the cold, please call 311 and an outreach team will be dispatched to offer assistance. During Code Blue Weather emergencies, experienced outreach teams work to connect homeless New Yorkers with the following resources:

- Shelters: During a Code Blue, shelter is available system-wide to accommodate anyone who is reasonably believed to be homeless and is brought to a shelter by outreach teams. Accommodations are also available for walk-ins.
- Drop-in centers: All drop-in centers are open 24-hours per day, including when Code Blue procedures are in effect, and will assist as many people as possible for the duration of the emergency. Drop-in staff and the dedicated outreach teams they work closely with every day can also make arrangements for homeless individuals at other citywide facilities.
- Safe havens and stabilization beds: Chronically homeless individuals may be transported directly to these low-threshold housing programs.
- Street homeless outreach: Teams will contact vulnerable individuals on their Code Blue Priority Lists a minimum of once every four (4) hours beginning at 8 p.m. during Code Blue Alerts and once every two (2) hours beginning at 8 p.m. for Enhanced Code Blue Alerts to encourage them to accept services, including transportation to a shelter placement. DSS coordinates borough-level Code Blue efforts directly with partner City agencies, including but not limited to NYPD, DSNY, and the Parks Department.

Department of Housing Preservation & Development

Residential building owners are legally required to maintain indoor temperatures at 68 degrees when the temperatures fall below 55 degrees outside during the day and a minimum of 62 degrees indoors overnight, regardless of outdoor temperatures. If an apartment lacks appropriate heat, a tenant should first attempt to notify the building owner, managing agent or superintendent. If heat is not restored, the tenant should register an official complaint via 311. Tenants can call 311, visit 311 online at www.nyc.gov/311, or use the app 311Mobile (on Android and iOS devices) to file a complaint. Hearing-impaired tenants can register complaints via a Touchtone Device for the Deaf TDD at (212) 504-4115.

Department for the Aging

- Seniors should contact their local center before leaving home, as senior centers may close on a case-by-case basis.
- Case-management clients are receiving additional meals, and social workers are calling high-risk clients to assess and address clients' needs before and during the storm.

NYCHA

- NYCHA's Office of Emergency Management will activate its Situation Room to monitor the storm.
- NYCHA Property Management will activate its snow preparation procedures to minimize impact of the storm.

Department of Environmental Protection

- DEP will deploy resources to assist DSNY with snow removal and will pre-position staff to ensure critical wastewater treatment and drinking water functions continue without interruption.

Winter Storm Safety Tips

- Use mass transit where possible. If you have to drive, drive slowly. Vehicles take longer to stop on snow and ice than on dry pavement.
- Four-wheel drive vehicles may make it easier to drive on snow-covered roads, but they do not stop quicker than other vehicles.
- Use major streets or highways for travel whenever possible.
- Know your vehicle's braking system. Vehicles with anti-lock brakes require a different braking technique than vehicles without anti-lock brakes in snowy conditions.
- If you are driving and begin to skid, ease your foot off the gas and steer in the direction you want the front of the car to go. Straighten the wheel when the car moves in the desired direction. If you have an anti-lock braking system (ABS), apply steady pressure to the brake pedal. Never pump the brakes on an ABS equipped vehicle.
- Try to keep your vehicle's gas tank as full as possible.
- Keep the name and phone number of at least one local towing service in your car in case you break down or become stuck.
- Exercise caution and avoid slippery surfaces; some ice may not be visible. Wear sturdy boots that provide traction to reduce slipping. Use handrails when using stairs.
- Seniors should take extra care outdoors to avoid slips and falls.
- Have heightened awareness of cars, particularly when approaching or crossing intersections.
- If you have to go outdoors, wear dry, warm clothing and cover exposed skin. Keep fingertips, earlobes, and noses covered. Wear a hat, hood, scarf, and gloves.
- Be careful when shoveling snow. Follow your doctor's advice if you have heart disease or high blood pressure. Cold weather puts an extra strain on the heart.
- Stay informed. Before and during an emergency, the City will send emergency alerts and updates to New Yorkers through various channels, including Notify NYC. New Yorkers are encouraged to sign up for Notify NYC, the City's free emergency communications program. To sign up for Notify NYC, download the [free mobile application](#), visit NYC.gov/NotifyNYC, call 311, or follow @NotifyNYC on Twitter.
- Charge cell phone batteries.
- Turn your refrigerator and freezer to a colder setting. If you lose power, items that need refrigeration will stay cooler for longer.
- If you lose power & have a disability/access and functional needs or use Life Sustaining Equipment (LSE) & need immediate assistance, dial 911.
- If you live in a flood-prone area, keep materials such as sandbags, plywood, plastic sheeting, and lumber on hand to help protect your home.
- When outside, avoid walking and driving through flooded areas. As few as six inches of moving water can knock a person over. Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars, causing loss of control and possible stalling. One or two feet of water can carry away a vehicle.

- Stay out of any building if it is surrounded by floodwaters.

Safe Home Heating Tips

Improper use of portable heating equipment can lead to fire or dangerous levels of carbon monoxide. Take precautions to ensure you are heating your home safely.

Fire safety tips:

- Make sure you have a working smoke alarm in every room. Test them at least once a month and change the batteries twice a year.
- Use only portable heating equipment that is approved for indoor use. Space heaters are temporary heating devices and should only be used for a limited time each day.
- Keep combustible materials, including furniture, drapes, and carpeting at least three feet away from the heat source. Never drape clothes over a space heater to dry them.
- Never leave running space heaters unattended, especially around children. Always keep an eye on heating equipment. Turn it off when you are unable to closely monitor it.
- Plug space heaters directly into a wall outlet. Never use an extension cord or power strip. Do not plug anything else into the same outlet when the space heater is in use. Do not use space heaters with frayed or damaged cords.
- If you are going to use an electric blanket, only use one that is less than 10 years old from the date of purchase. Also avoid tucking the electric blanket in at the sides of the bed. Only purchase blankets with an automatic safety shut-off.

Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning:

- Carbon monoxide comes from the burning of fuel. Therefore, make sure all fuel-burning devices such as furnaces, boilers, hot water heaters, and clothes dryers are properly vented to the outdoors and operating properly. If you are not sure, contact a professional to inspect and make necessary repairs.
- Make sure you have a working carbon monoxide detector. Most homes and residential buildings in New York City are required by law to have carbon monoxide detectors installed near all sleeping areas. Owners are responsible for installing approved carbon monoxide detectors. Occupants are responsible for keeping and maintaining the carbon monoxide detectors in good repair.
- Keep fireplace chimneys clean and clear of debris.
- Never heat your home with a gas stove or oven, charcoal barbecue grill, kerosene, propane, or oil-burning heaters. Kerosene heaters and propane space heaters are illegal in New York City.

- The symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are non-specific and include headache, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, sleepiness, trouble breathing, and loss of consciousness. Severe poisonings may result in permanent injury or death.

If a carbon monoxide detector goes off in your home get outside immediately and call 911. If you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning, get outside immediately and call 911. For more fire safety information, visit [FDNYsmart.org](https://fdnysmart.org).

For more information, visit nyc.gov/emergencymanagement. New Yorkers are encouraged to sign up for Notify NYC, the City's free emergency communications program, for the latest information and updates on this storm and emergency events in NYC. To sign up for Notify NYC, download the [free mobile application](#), visit [NYC.gov/NotifyNYC](https://nyc.gov/NotifyNYC), call 311, or follow @NotifyNYC on Twitter.

Omar Bourne

Deputy Press Secretary

NYC Emergency Management

718.422.4888 (desk)

obourne@oem.nyc.gov