

For Immediate Release
#48-20

**NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ISSUES HAZARDOUS TRAVEL ADVISORY FOR
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16 THROUGH THURSDAY DECEMBER 17**

Winter Storm Warning in effect from Wednesday afternoon through Thursday afternoon; 8 to 12 inches of snow is predicted

Alternate Side Parking Regulations are suspended Wednesday, December 16 and Thursday, December 17; parking meters remain in effect

December 15, 2020 — The New York City Emergency Management Department today issued a hazardous travel advisory for Wednesday afternoon, December 16 through Thursday, December 17. The National Weather Service has issued a Winter Storm Warning for New York City in effect from 2 p.m. Wednesday through 1 p.m. Thursday, December 17. According to the National Weather Service, a winter storm is expected to bring snow to the area beginning Wednesday afternoon, continuing through the Thursday morning rush. Light snow will develop Wednesday afternoon, intensifying into the night. The heaviest period of snow is forecast for Wednesday evening through early Thursday morning. There is the potential for snowfall rates of 1 to 2 inches per hour. Snow is expected to end by mid-morning Thursday, though a lingering snow shower is possible. A total of 8 to 12 inches of snow is expected, with locally higher amounts possible. High winds are also in the forecast for Wednesday evening through Thursday morning, with sustained winds 20 mph to 30 mph, and gusts up to 50 mph. The combination of heavy snow and breezing conditions could cause near-blizzard conditions. Temperatures are only expected to reach the mid-30s on Thursday and Friday, which will result in the potential for continued dangerous road conditions after the snow has ended.

A Coastal Flood Watch is also in effect for southern Queens from 8 a.m. Thursday through 2 p.m. Thursday. A Coastal Flood Watch means that conditions favorable for flooding are expected to develop. Some roads and low-lying property including parking lots, parks, lawns, and homes or businesses near the waterfront may experience flooding, and widespread to moderate coastal flooding is possible. Coastal residents should be alert for later statements or warnings, and take action to protect property.

A Coastal Flood Advisory is in effect for northern Queens and the Bronx from 11 p.m. Wednesday to 2 a.m. Thursday. Minor to locally moderate flooding is expected in the most vulnerable locations near the waterfront and shoreline. Expect 1 to locally 2 feet of inundation above ground level in low-lying, vulnerable areas. Some roads and low-lying property including parking lots, parks, lawns and homes/businesses with basements near the waterfront will experience shallow flooding.

New Yorkers are advised to work remotely and refrain from unnecessary travel. If travel is necessary, use mass transit where possible, wear a face covering, and adhere to social distancing guidelines. If you must drive, allow for extra travel time, keep an extra flashlight, food, and water in your vehicle in case of an emergency, and exercise extreme caution.

“The City is ready to battle whatever snowfall Mother Nature will bring to our area this week, and we encourage New Yorkers to prepare for this storm,” said **NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Deanne Criswell**. “We advise you to avoid any unnecessary travel. We will continue to work closely with our partners to prepare for and respond to any impacts from the inclement weather.”

“This is forecast to be a significant snowstorm, and we need all New Yorkers to stay off the roads as much as possible. The dedicated men and women of the Department of Sanitation will be out there before the first flake, and throughout this event, doing all we can to keep roads passable for essential travel and emergency vehicles. We remind all New Yorkers to follow the messaging and to have patience as we respond to this major storm,” said **Acting Commissioner of the New York City Department of Sanitation Edward Grayson**.

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. The agency will activate the City’s virtual Emergency Operations Center (EOC) on Wednesday with City, state, and private partners to coordinate the response to the storm. The City’s Sanitation department is pre-deploying 705 salt spreaders and 30 brine vehicles before the first snow flake, will activate PlowNYC to monitor plowing progress, and will dispatch 1,300 plows when more than two inches of snow accumulates, with additional plows available if necessary. DSNY will assign 2,000 workers per shift. Workers were assigned to 12-hour shifts. For additional DSNY updates, along with agency updates, visit [NYC.gov/SevereWeather](https://nyc.gov/SevereWeather).

Winter Storm Safety Tips

- Stay off the roads as much as possible. If you must travel, use mass transit, and check mta.info for scheduling. Remember to wear a face covering and adhere to social distancing guidelines.
- If you must drive, drive slowly. Allow for extra travel time, and exercise caution when traveling. Use major streets or highways for travel whenever possible.
- Pedestrians should 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.
- Take care when walking on snow and ice, especially if you are an older adult. 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. Stay alert for signs of hypothermia, like intense shivering or dizziness, and anyone who experiences these symptoms should seek medical attention or call 911.
- 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.
- Check on family, friends and neighbors who may need help in cold weather — especially older adults or people with disabilities — to make sure they are safe inside and have heat.
- Immediately tell your building superintendent, property manager or owner if you do not have heat. Call 311 if the problem is not fixed quickly and go to a warm place, such as a friend’s or family member’s home (while maintaining proper physical distance and wearing a face mask). If you stay at home, wear layers of clothing.
- 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. Do not heat your home with a gas stove or oven, charcoal grill, or kerosene, propane, or oil-burning heaters.

Power Outages

- 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.
- 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](https://nyc.gov/NotifyNYC), call 311, or follow @NotifyNYC on Twitter.

For additional safety tips, visit [NYC.gov/SevereWeather](https://nyc.gov/SevereWeather) and the Health Department's [online infographic](#).

Open Restaurants:

While the Sanitation Department has trained to remove snow on streets with Open Restaurant structures, restaurateurs must also take steps to protect their patrons, staff and property:

- Use snow sticks to increase visibility.
- Regularly remove snow and ice from sidewalks; clear a path to the crosswalk, if applicable.
- Do not to block fire hydrants.
- It is illegal to push snow into the street. Snow may be placed at the curb line, against the building, or on private property.

The Sanitation Department will issue both Snow Alerts and Winter Operations Advisories this year.

Winter Operations Advisory and Open Restaurants

During a Winter Operations Advisory, winter weather is possible, and the Sanitation Department is prepared to respond. While roadway dining may continue, Open Restaurants should take steps to protect patrons, staff and property. The Department may spread salt and/or brine on the roadway to prevent freezing, even before the Advisory begins.

Snow Alerts and Open Restaurants

During a Snow Alert, roadway dining **MUST CLOSE** by the time indicated in the Alert. All tables and chairs should be removed or secured, electric heaters should be removed, and the tops of structures should be removed, if possible. The Sanitation Department may begin spreading salt and/or brine on the roadway up to 48 hours before an Alert begins.

Additionally, if the forecast calls for 12 inches of snow or more, Open Restaurants should remove or consolidate structures, including barriers, to take up as little space as possible. This makes plowing easier and protects property. For more information visit [NYC.gov/DSNY](https://nyc.gov/DSNY).

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. For more severe weather information, visit [NYC.gov/SevereWeather](https://nyc.gov/SevereWeather).



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