

# STAYING SAFE DURING A SNOWSTORM OR EXTREME COLD



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## PREPARE

- Know where you will go if your home becomes too cold.
- Make sure your cell phone is fully charged, and you have a way to recharge it.
- Refuel your vehicles. Charge your and other devices. Make sure you have batteries for flashlights.
- Store water in plastic jugs in case your pipes freeze or water service is interrupted.
- Make sure you have at least a one-week supply of any medications you take.
- Make sure your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working.
- Leave a small trickle of cold and hot water running in each sink and in the shower/bathtub to help prevent your pipes from freezing.
- Bring your pets or service animals inside. Wipe off their paws; ice-melting chemicals can make your animals sick. Make sure they have water and food.

## LOOK OUT FOR ONE ANOTHER

- Check on friends, relatives, and neighbors who may need assistance to ensure they are adequately protected from the cold. Infants, seniors, and people with paralysis or neuropathy are at increased risk of hypothermia and frostbite.

## WHILE INSIDE

### EMERGENCY HEATING

- Use only portable heating equipment that is approved for indoor use.
- Keep combustible materials, including furniture, drapes, and carpeting, at least three feet away from a heat source. NEVER drape clothes over a space heater to dry.
- Always keep an eye on heating equipment. Never leave children alone in a room where a space heater is running. Turn it off when you are unable to monitor it closely.
- Be careful not to overload electrical circuits.

### IF YOU HAVE A POWER OUTAGE

- Call your utility company to report outages. If your utility company is Cleveland Public Power, call 216 664-3156.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed. An unopened refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours.
- If possible, use flashlights instead of candles. If you must use candles, never leave a burning candle unattended. Never go to sleep with candles burning.
- Unplug sensitive electronics to avoid power surges when power is restored.
- Use extreme caution around downed wires - do not touch or attempt to remove downed wires. Report downed wires to emergency services immediately.

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## IF YOU HAVE TO GO OUTSIDE

### DRESS APPROPRIATELY

- Wear three layers clothing—a base layer, a middle layer, and a water-resistant outer shell.
- Keep your nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, and toes covered in warm, dry clothing. These areas are the first to be at risk for frostbite.
- Recognize the signs and symptoms of frostbite and hypothermia:
- Hypothermia: symptoms include slurred speech, sluggishness, confusion, dizziness, shallow breathing, unusual behavior, and slow, irregular heartbeat.
- Frostbite: symptoms include gray, white, or yellow discoloration, numbness, and waxy feeling skin.

### CLEARING SNOW

- If shoveling, follow these safety tips:
- Do not shovel after eating or while smoking
- Take it slow and stretch out before you begin
- Shovel only fresh, powdery snow; it's lighter
- Push the snow rather than lifting it
- If you do lift it, use a small shovel or only partially fill the shovel
- Lift with your legs, not your back
- Do not work to the point of exhaustion
- If using a snow blower, follow these safety tips:
- Put on protective eyewear, such as safety glasses or goggles.
- Wear slip-resistant boots.
- Never pick up the machine to move it. The blades are sharp enough to hurt you.
- Don't allow children to operate a snowblower or be around you when you are.
- Keep your hands and feet away from all moving parts of the snowblower.
- Turn the snowblower off if it clogs and disengage the clutch. Wait five minutes for the blades to shut down completely. Then, use a stick or broom handle to clear the snow from the blower. Never put your hand down the chute or around the blades.
- Don't throw snow from driveways and sidewalks into the street, and do not block sidewalks while plowing your driveway.
- Do not place trash cans or rubbish in the street

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## IF YOU HAVE TO GO OUTSIDE (continued)

### DRIVING

- If possible, don't drive.
- Before you drive, completely clear your windows, mirrors, lights, and roof of all snow and ice. Don't overlook your roof. Ice left on your vehicle's roof can slide forward and block your windshield.
- Ensure your tires are fully inflated and have good tread, your battery is strong, your wiper blades are in good condition, and that you have plenty of windshield wiper fluid.
- Keep a first-aid kit, blankets, a flashlight, jumper cables, a small shovel, food, water, an extra hat and gloves, and a phone charger in your vehicle for emergencies.
- Remember that posted speed limits are for dry conditions. Reduce your speed to match the road conditions.
- Double or triple the normal following distance to give yourself more time to stop. A distance of five to six seconds is a good guideline.
- Stay well back from snowplows, as the driver may have limited visibility and the road ahead may be worse.
- Avoid hard braking. Press the brake pedal firmly and smoothly. If you don't have ABS, gently pump the brakes. If you skid, steer in the direction of the skid and ease off the brake pedal.
- When going uphill or on slippery surfaces, use a lower gear to maintain traction and avoid wheel spin.
- Do not use cruise control on snowy or icy roads.
- Turn on your headlights, not just your daytime running lights, to increase your visibility to other drivers.
- Treat any intersection with a non-functioning traffic signal as a four-way stop.
- Keep a snow shovel, ice melt, and cardboard you can put under your tires in case you get stuck in the snow.
- During heavy snow events, don't park vehicles in the street or near the edge of your driveway and street. Doing so can slow clearing operations and put your vehicle and other drivers at risk.



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## IF NECESSARY, SEEK SHELTER

- Anyone seeking shelter should contact United Way 2-1-1 or visit the County's Emergency Management website for information on warming centers.

## WARMING CENTERS

*Recreation centers that will serve as warming centers:*

**Michael Zone Recreation Center** (West side)  
6301 Lorain Ave. | (216) 664-3373

**EJ Kovacic Recreation Center** (Near downtown)  
6250 St. Clair Avenue | (216) 664-4140

**Zelma George Recreation Center** (Southeast)  
3155 Martin L. King Blvd. | (216) 420-8800

**Collinwood Recreation Center** (Northeast)  
16300 Lakeshore Blvd. | (216) 420-8323

## WARMING CENTER DAYS/HOURS OF OPERATION

<b>Friday, January 23</b>	<b>11:30 am–10 pm</b>
<b>Friday, January 24</b>	<b>10:00 am–10 pm</b>
<b>Sunday, January 25</b>	<b>10:00 am–10 pm</b>
<b>Monday, January 26</b>	<b>11:30 am–10 pm</b>
<b>Tuesday, January 27</b>	<b>11:30 am–10 pm</b>
<b>Wednesday, January 28</b>	<b>11:30 am–10 pm</b>

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Cuyahoga County Division of Senior and Adult Services](#) aids our senior population. Call 216-420-6700

- [Office of Homeless Services](#)
- [HEAP Winter Crisis Program](#)
- [FEMA Winter Storm Guide](#)