



NJ Office of Emergency Management

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NJOEM Encourages Winter Weather Preparedness

West Trenton, NJ – In preparation for the anticipated winter weather, Colonel Rick Fuentes, Superintendent of the New Jersey State Police and Director of the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management, is encouraging all New Jersey residents to participate in Winter Weather Preparedness.

As such, New Jersey residents are strongly encouraged to prepare their homes, vehicles, and discuss with family members the potential effects of winter storms as well as learning about how to calmly and safely manage some of the winter season's challenging conditions.

"By proactively preparing for winter weather before the first snow flakes fall, you are helping to protect yourself and your family from the winter elements that we sometimes encounter in our great state," said Colonel Fuentes.

The following is a brief list of general winter weather preparedness tips:

Travel Items to Include: All cars should be equipped with road maps, a cell phone, a shovel, a windshield scraper, a towrope, booster cables, and a brightly colored cloth to use as a distress signal. A bag of sand or non-clumping cat litter to spread under tires if stuck in snow is also recommended.

Proper Travel Notification: Drivers should inform someone that they are taking a trip, where they are going, the routes that will be traveled and when they are expected to return. Upon reaching their destination, drivers should call to report arrival. If traveling a long distance, please remember to fill up on fuel prior to making your trip. While traveling, stop frequently to refill the fuel tank. The breaks will help drivers stay alert.

On the Road: Always follow the rules of the road and adhere to the following guidelines:

- Always buckle your seat belt.
- Brake properly to avoid skidding. If driving on snow or ice, start slowly and brake gently. Begin braking early when approaching an intersection.
- If the vehicle starts to slide, ease off the gas pedal or brakes. Steer into the direction of the skid until regaining traction, and then straighten the vehicle. For vehicles with antilock brakes, apply steady pressure.
- Visibility and speed:

- In fog, drive with headlights set on dim or use fog lights.
- In rain, fog, snow or sleet, stay within the limits of your vision. If it is too difficult to see, pull off the road and stop.
- Drive slowly and increase following distance. Vehicle speed should adjust for conditions and match the flow of traffic.
- Watch for slick spots. Be physically and mentally prepared to react.

Be a Good Neighbor

During a storm New Jersey residents with special needs might need some additional assistance. Be a good neighbor and check in members of your community who are elderly or homebound as well as those with limited mobility, communication barriers and transportation issues prior to a storm. Additionally, New Jersey residents with a special need and/or their care givers can log on to www.registerreadynj.gov and sign up for the free, voluntary and confidential special needs registry. By registering, first responders will be given the ability to prepare, locate and assist those with a special need in the event of a catastrophic event.

Stay Informed

Winter weather changes from day to day. Actively follow the five day forecast via the print, radio, television and electronic media outlets available to you. NJOEM strongly suggests that all residents with cell phones and email addresses sign up for NJ Alert at www.njalert.gov. NJ Alert is the state's free, voluntary and confidential mass text and email notification system. NJ Alert will be utilized during extreme emergencies that impact New Jersey (statewide or regionally) on a catastrophic level. When applicable, NJ Alert will be used in addition to the Emergency Alert System (EAS).

"Last year, New Jersey experienced the damaging effects of several strong winter storms. Our resident's and first responder's preparedness efforts were second to none. I encourage everyone to once again remember their winter preparedness responsibilities and keep up the good work this winter," Fuentes added.

Additionally, a winter weather safety guide can be found on the official New Jersey Office of Emergency Management website at <http://www.ready.nj.gov/plan/winter.html>. Logging on to the website will allow individuals to access, download, and printout valuable winter storm related information from the state's foremost emergency management site free of charge and available anytime day or night.

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