*Winter Safety Tips*

The Office of Fire & Emergency Services advises that a winter storm can be very dangerous. Preparing for ad responding to all types of cold weather conditions can reduce the dangers caused by winter storms.

**TERMS TO KNOW:**

* **Winter Storm Watch**:
	+ Indicates severe winter weather may affect your area
* **Winter Storm Warning:**
	+ Severe winter weather conditions will affect your area.
* **Blizzard Warning:**
	+ Large amounts of falling or blowing snow, winds of at least 34 mph are expected to last for several hours.
* **Wind Chill:**
	+ Life-threatening wind chill conditions occur whenever the combination of wind speed and air temperature combine to produce win chills of minus 30°F or lower. This is the temperature at which exposed skin would suffer frostbite within a short period of time.

**Listen to the Local Emergency Alert System Stations for Updates**

**BEFORE THE STORM STRIKES:**

* Be familiar with storm warning signals.
* Service snow removal equipment. Use rock salt to melt ice on walkways, and kitty litter or sand to temporarily generate traction.
* Winterize your home.
* Maintain a surplus of heating fuel.
* Have some type of safe, emergency heating equipment available.
* Install and check smoke detectors.
* Keep pipes from freezing.
* Have adequate winter supplies on hand.

**WINTER HEALTH HAZARDS:**

* **FROSTBITE** is a severe reaction to cold exposure that can permanently damage its victims. Symptoms include a loss of feeling and a white or pale appearance in fingers, toes, nose, and/or ear lobes
* **HYPOTHERMIA** is brought on when the body core temperature drops below normal. Symptoms include uncontrollable shivering, slow speech, memory lapses, frequent stumbling, and drowsiness.
* If frostbite or hypothermia is suspected, slowly warm the victim, and seek immediate medical assistance. Never give frostbite or hypothermia victims sedatives or alcohol.

**WINTER EMERGENCY SUPPLIES:**

* One week supply of food (include item that do not require refrigeration or cooking in case the power is turned off).
* Flashlight and extra batteries.
* Portable can opener.
* Portable battery-operated radio and extra batteries.
* One week supply of essential prescription medications.
* Extra blankets and sleeping bags.
* First aid kit.
* Fire Extinguisher.

**IF TRAPPED IN A CAR DURING A BLIZZARD:**

* STAY IN THE CAR. DO NOT leave the vehicle to search for assistance unless assistance is visible within 100 feet. You can become disoriented and lost in blowing snow.
* AVOID OVEREXERTION. Cold weather puts n added strain on the heart. Shoveling snow or pushing a car can cause a heart attack.
* DISPLAY A TROUBLE SIGN. Hang a brightly colored cloth on the radio antenna, raise the hood, and turn on flashing hazard lights. At night, use the dome light.
* OCCASIONALLY RUN THE ENGINE TO KEEP WARM. Run the heater sparingly. Beware of carbon monoxide poisoning. Keep the exhaust pipe clear of snow and open window downwind for ventilation.
* DO MINOR EXERCIES TO KEP UP CIRCULATION. Clap hands, move arms and legs. Try not to stay in one position too long.
* IF MORE THAN ONE PERSON IS IN THE CAR, take turns sleeping and huddle together for warmth.

**WINTER CAR KIT:**

* Several blankets & sleeping bags
* Newspapers for insulation
* Matches and candles
* Flashlight and extra batteries
* Extra set of mittens, socks, and wool cap
* First Aid Kit with pocketknife
* Small sack of sand to generate traction
* Small shovel, pliers, wrench, & screwdriver
* Windshield scraper and a small broom
* Booster cables
* Set of tire chains
* Distress flares
* Cards, games, and puzzles
* Brightly colored cloth to use as a flag