

WINTER STORMS

Winter storms are common in Colorado. The snowstorm of March, 2003 set records which caused millions of dollars in damage to power lines / buildings, and stranded hundreds of people.

Before Severe Weather Arrives

- Have a 72-Hour Preparedness Kit assembled (*refer to 72-HOUR PREPAREDNESS KIT*).
- Obtain a NOAA Weather Radio to monitor severe weather (*refer to EARLY WARNING / INFORMATION SYSTEMS*).
- Learn the early warning systems available in Broomfield (*refer to EARLY WARNING / INFORMATION SYSTEMS*).
- Learn the **warning terms** for Winter Storms, so that you clearly understand the risk to your family and your community.
 - **"Winter Storm Watch"** indicates that severe winter weather may affect your area. Be alert, a storm is likely.
 - **"Winter Storm Warning"** indicates that severe winter weather conditions are definitely on the way. Take action, the storm is in or entering the area.
 - **"Blizzard Warning"** means that large amounts of falling or blowing snow and sustained winds of at least 35 mph are expected for several hours. Snow and strong winds will produce blinding conditions, near zero visibility, deep drifts, and life-threatening wind chill – seek refuge immediately!
 - **"Winter Weather Advisory"** means winter weather conditions are expected to cause significant inconveniences and may be hazardous, especially to motorists.
 - **"Frost / Freeze Warning"** below freezing temperatures are expected, and may cause damage to plants.
 - **"Wind Chill"** a calculation of how cold it feels outside when the effects of temperature and wind speed are combined. A strong wind combined with a temperature of just below freezing can have the same effect as a still-air temperature approximately 35° colder.
- Locate snow shovels and ice scrapers.
- Service snow removal equipment and have rock salt on hand to melt ice on walkways, and kitty litter or sand to generate temporary traction.
- Winterize your house. Install storm shutters, doors and windows.
- Prepare your car, including a car survival kit (*refer to CAR SURVIVAL KIT on page 9*).

During A Winter Storm

- Monitor your NOAA Weather Radio, or keep a local radio and/or TV station on for information and emergency instructions (*refer to EARLY WARNING / INFORMATION SYSTEMS*).
- Stay indoors and dress warmly.
- Close off unused rooms.
- Avoid travel if possible.
- Check on neighbors, especially elderly and those with disabilities.
- Make sure pets have plenty of food, water and shelter.

While Outdoors

- Wear several layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing, rather than one layer of heavy clothing.
- Outer garments should be tightly woven and water-repellent.
- Wear mittens or gloves.
- Wear a hat.
- Cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs from extremely cold air.
- Wear sturdy, waterproof boots in snow or flooding conditions.
- Keep dry.
- Avoid overexertion. Cold weather puts an added strain on the heart. Unaccustomed exercise such as shoveling snow or pushing a car can bring on a heart attack or make other medical conditions worse.
- Be aware of symptoms of dehydration.
- Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.

Preparing Your Car

The leading cause of death during winter storms is transportation accidents. Preparing your vehicle for the winter season, and knowing how to react if stranded or lost on the road are the keys to safe winter driving.

- Keep your vehicles fueled, in good repair, and with good winter tires.
- Have a mechanic check the following items on your car:
 - Battery
 - Antifreeze
 - Wipers
 - Windshield washer fluid
 - Ignition system
 - Thermostat
 - Lights
 - Flashing hazard lights
 - Exhaust system
 - Heater
 - Brakes
 - Defroster
 - Oil level

Car Survival Kit

- Place a **Car Survival Kit** in each car that includes:
 - Cellular phone - charged with a spare battery
 - Shovel
 - Windshield ice scraper and snow brush
 - Flashlight and extra batteries
 - Battery-powered radio and extra batteries
 - Water and snack food
 - Extra hats, mittens, and blanket
 - First aid kit
 - Tool kit
 - Compass and maps
 - Tow chain or rope
 - Road salt, sand, or cat litter
 - A large, empty can to be used for bathroom emergencies
 - Battery booster cables
 - Emergency flares and a fluorescent distress flag