

## **WINTER STORMS**

Winter storms can include high winds, freezing rain, sleet, heavy snowfall and extreme cold.

Severe winter storms can cause blocked roads, downed power lines, power outages and transportation accidents.

### **In general, you should know the following terms:**

**Winter Storm Watch** means a winter storm is possible.

**Winter Storm Warning** means a winter storm is occurring or will soon occur.

**Blizzard Warning:** Sustained winds or frequent gusts to 35 miles per hour or greater and considerable amounts of falling or blowing snow (reducing visibility to less than a quarter of a mile) are expected for a period of three hours or longer.

**Frost/Freeze Warning:** Below freezing temperatures are expected.

**Freezing Rain:** Rain that freezes when it hits the ground, creating a coating of ice on roads, walkways, trees and power lines.

**Sleet:** Rain that turns to ice pellets before reaching the ground, causing moisture on roads to freeze and become slippery.

### **In the event of a winter storm, you should:**

Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow. Overexertion can bring on a heart attack -a major cause of death during the winter.

Listen to your radio, television or NOAA Weather Radio for weather reports and emergency information.

Have an emergency kit in your home and car.

Drive only if it is absolutely necessary. If you must drive, consider the following:

- \* Travel during the day and keep others informed of your schedule.
- \* Stay on main roads; avoid back roads and alleys.

Keep your gas tank as full as possible during cold weather.

Maintain ventilation when using kerosene heaters to avoid build-up of toxic fumes. Refuel kerosene heaters outside and keep them at least three feet from flammable objects.

Dress for the weather. Wear several layers of loose fitting, lightweight, warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing. Wear mittens, a hat and cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs.

Watch for signs of frostbite - skin appears white and waxy, numbness or no feeling in

that area and/or possible blisters.

Watch for signs of hypothermia - shivering and numbness, confusion or dizziness, stumbling and weakness, slow or slurred speech and shock.

Go to a medical facility immediately if you or someone you know is experiencing signs of hypothermia.

If you see homeless people stranded in the cold, call your local authorities so they can find a shelter for them.