

WINTER STORMS

A fresh supply of arctic air is moving into the nation's midsection as a sharp, southward plunge of the jet stream carves into the western and central U.S., pulling increasing moisture northward over the freezing air. When this setup happens in mid-winter, it can deliver a widespread area of snow and ice that affects multiple regions over the course of several days.

Winter storm warnings, winter storm watches and winter weather advisories have been issued by the National Weather Service for an area that stretches from Colorado and New Mexico to upstate New York and northern New England. That's a distance that covers more than 1,800 miles as the crow flies. On Thursday, snow, sleet, and freezing rain may persist as far south as Southern, Central and West Texas.



Preparation before the storm is the most important action you can take to increase your safety during the storm.

- Listen to weather forecasts regularly and check your [emergency supplies](#) including your [emergency food and water supplies](#).

Vehicle storm preparedness will increase your odds of surviving without injury or excessive distress.

- Make sure your vehicle service and maintenance needs are up to date.
- Have the radiator system serviced or check the antifreeze level yourself with an antifreeze tester. Add or concentrate the antifreeze as needed.
- Replace windshield-wiper fluid with a wintertime mixture. Replace windshield wipers if needed.
- Make sure the tires on your car have adequate tread and air pressure. Replace any worn tires and fill low tires with air to the proper pressure recommended for your car.
- Keep the gas tank near full to help avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines.
- Keep your car in good working order. Be sure to check the following: heater, defroster, brakes, brake fluid, belts, emergency flashers, exhaust, oil, and battery.

Traveling or working in a winter storm/ice storm comes with a unique set of hazards that can easily be managed.

- Prepare yourself with a cell phone, a working charger cable, and a portable charger.
- Make sure you have the Crew App installed on your phone and you are a member of the Validus Crew team.
- Prepare your vehicle for the storm with extra winter hat/s, coats, insulated gloves, a spare blanket and a fire blanket, windshield ice scraper, shovel, battery powered emergency weather radio with extra batteries, flashlight with extra batteries, plenty of water, high protein snack food, chain or tow strap, tire chains, tire repair kit with a can of air, cat litter or sand for tire traction, booster cables or jumper cables, waterproof matches and a metal can for melting ice.

Driving in a winter storm/ice storm can be treacherous, and ice can form on everything at surface level, including the roads, trees, powerlines, and your vehicle exterior. Ice forms when the air at ground surface is below 32 degrees and rain is falling; the low temperature causes the precipitation to freeze upon impact, thus creating ice.

Road ice is notoriously difficult to detect when driving. Pay close attention to the road surface when driving in potentially icy conditions, and watch out for pavement that looks dark, wet, or like new asphalt. Sometimes ice on the roadway is invisible, especially at the beginning of a storm. If an area has seen exceptionally low temperatures, recent precipitation, or has a history of icing, ice could very well be present on the roadways. Additionally, bridges or elevated roadways are more likely to form ice.

Tips for driving or working in a winter storm/ice storm:

- Keep a close eye on the road surface
- Take it easy until you know how your vehicle handles on ice
- Pay especially close attention to other drivers
- Make yourself as visible as possible
- Watch your step and expect slippery surfaces
- Increase following distance
- Slow down
- Do not stop on hills or slopes
- Let people know where you are
- Do not take unnecessary chances