



DMA Helps You Deal with Ice, and Cold, and Snow, and...

TIPS FOR STAYING WARM

Exposure to cold can cause life-threatening health conditions. Avoid serious conditions such as frostbite and hypothermia, by keeping warm.

- Wear a hat, hood, or scarf, as most heat is lost through the head.
- Wear layers, as they provide better insulation and warmth.
- Keep fingertips, earlobes, and noses covered if you go outside.
- Keep clothing dry; if a layer becomes wet, remove it.

SNOW REMOVAL SAFETY TIPS

- **Stretch before you go out.** If you go out to shovel snow, do a few stretching exercises to warm up your body. This may prevent injury.
- **Cover your mouth.** Protect your lungs from extremely cold air by covering your mouth when outdoors.
- **Avoid overexertion.** Cold weather puts an added strain on the heart. Unfamiliar exercise, such as shoveling snow or pushing a car, can bring on a heart attack or make other medical conditions worse. Take frequent rest breaks, and drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.
- **Keep dry.** Change wet clothes frequently to prevent a loss of body heat. Wet clothing loses all of its insulating value and transmits heat rapidly.
- **Stay safe.** Walk carefully on snowy or icy sidewalks. If using a snowblower, NEVER use your hands to unclog the machine.
- **Maintain an awareness of utilities when shoveling snow.** Do not cover fire hydrants with snow when clearing sidewalks and driveways. Do not shovel snow into manholes and catch basins.
- **Offer to help individuals who require special assistance,** including seniors and people with disabilities.

CLEARING SNOW AND DANGLING ICE FROM ROOFS

- Snow and rain that collects on roofs becomes heavy and may damage buildings.
- Remove leaves and debris from roof drains to prevent water from collecting.
- In addition to cleaning out gutters, clear snow from roofs and drains.
- Flat roofs require special attention. Snow and water should be removed with drainage systems or manually.

The NYC Department of Buildings urges building owners and managers to remove ice from their buildings where possible. If ice removal is not possible, building owners and managers should rope off the unsafe area.

Residents should take care to avoid areas roped off due to hazardous ice conditions, and be cautious of dangerous, hanging ice.

ICE SAFETY TIPS

During the winter months, ponds and lakes in City parks may appear frozen, but venturing onto them is extremely dangerous and can cause potentially fatal accidents. To remind people of the

dangers of thin ice, most parks & recreation departments post warning signs along the perimeter of city lakes and ponds. Never go on frozen waters (unless clearly marked otherwise with official signs).

- Parents and caregivers should make sure children are never unattended near ice.
- If you hear cracking, lie down immediately to try to distribute your weight.
- If you witness someone falling through ice, never attempt to make a rescue by yourself.
- Call 911 and notify the proper authorities. Be sure to give the exact location and an account of the incident.

SAFE HOME HEATING TIPS

Improper use of portable heating equipment can lead to fire or dangerous levels of carbon monoxide. Take precautions to ensure you are heating your home safely.

FIRE SAFETY:

- Use only portable heating equipment that is approved for indoor use.
- Keep combustible materials, including furniture, drapes, and carpeting at least three feet away from the heat source. NEVER drape clothes over a space heater to dry.
- Always keep an eye on heating equipment. Never leave children alone in the room where a space heater is running. Turn it off when you are unable to closely monitor it.
- Be careful not to overload electrical circuits.

Make sure you have a working smoke detector in every room. Check and change batteries often.

CARBON MONOXIDE SAFETY:

- Install a carbon monoxide detector in your home and check it regularly to make sure the battery is working. It is a good idea to install at least one approved carbon monoxide alarm within 15 feet of the primary entrance to each sleeping room.
- Make sure your heating system is kept clean and properly vented; have worn or defective parts replaced.
- Kerosene heaters are dangerous and illegal in many cities.
- Don't heat your home with a gas stove or oven.
- Do not use any gas-powered appliance, charcoal grill, or hibachi indoors.
- Open your garage door before starting your car and do not leave the motor running in an enclosed area. Clear exhaust pipes before starting a car or truck after it snows.
- **The most common symptom of carbon monoxide poisoning is headache.** However, symptoms may also include dizziness, chest pain, nausea, and vomiting. In severe cases, people can become increasingly irritable, agitated and confused, eventually becoming lethargic and lapsing into unconsciousness.
- If you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning, call **911**, and get the victim to fresh air immediately, and open windows.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU LOSE POWER

In addition, the [Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency](#) offers this advice if you lose power:

"Severe Winter Weather, including heavy wet snow, sleet, freezing rain and high winds, has the potential to cause power outages throughout the Commonwealth," warns Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency Director Don Boyce. "The weight of a one-half inch build-up can be enough to snap tree limbs, causing them to fall and bring down power lines disrupting electrical service."

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) has the following tips for dealing with a possible winter power outage:

- Check flashlights and portable radios to ensure that they are working, and you have extra batteries. A radio is an important source of weather and emergency information during a storm.
- The use of candles is strongly discouraged.
- Have sufficient heating fuel, as regular sources may be cut off. Have emergency heating equipment and fuel (a gas fireplace, wood burning stove or fireplace) so you can keep at least one room livable. Be sure the room is well ventilated.
- If utilizing an emergency generator, read, understand and follow the manufacturer's instructions. Always operate emergency generators outdoors and away from any open window. Make sure your generator is properly grounded and installed as you may be liable for damage or injury to people and property that may result from improperly installed or operated equipment.
- Ensure that your Carbon Monoxide (CO) detectors are working correctly and have fresh batteries. Check your outside fuel exhaust vents, making sure that they are not obstructed by snow or ice. Never use cooking equipment intended for outside use indoors as a heat source or cooking device.
- If your water supply could be affected by a power outage (a well-water pump system), fill your bathtub and spare containers with water. Water in the bathtub should be used for sanitation purposes only, not as drinking water. Pouring a pail of water from the tub directly into the bowl can flush a toilet.
- If pipes freeze, remove insulation, completely open all faucets and pour hot water over the pipes, starting where they are most exposed to the cold. A hand-held hair dryer, used with caution, also works well.
- Set your refrigerator and freezer to their coldest settings (remember to reset them back to normal once power is restored). During an outage, do not open the refrigerator or freezer door. Food can stay cold in a full refrigerator for up to 24 hours, and in a well-packed freezer for 48 hours (24 hours if it is half-packed). If you have medication that requires refrigeration, check with your pharmacist for guidance on proper storage during an extended outage.
- In order to protect against possible voltage irregularities that can occur when power is restored, you should unplug all sensitive electronic equipment, including TVs, stereo, VCR, microwave oven, computer, cordless telephone, answering machine and garage door opener. Be sure to leave one light on, so you will know when power is restored.
- Review the process for manually operating an electric garage door.
- If you lose your heat, seal off unused rooms by stuffing towels in the cracks under the doors. At night, cover windows with extra blankets or sheets. Food provides the body with energy for producing its own heat.
- Check with elderly or disabled relatives and neighbors to ensure their safety.
- Be extra cautious if you go outside to inspect for damage after a storm. Downed or hanging electrical wires can be hidden by snowdrifts, trees or debris, and could be live. Never attempt to touch or moved downed lines. Keep children and pets away from them.

- Do not touch anything power lines are touching, such as tree branches or fences. Always assume a downed line is a live line. Call your utility company to report any outage-related problem.
- Make sure you always have a well-stocked Winter Home Emergency Supply Kit that includes flashlights, portable radio, extra batteries, a first aid kit, bottled water, non-perishable food and a manual can opener.

IF YOUR SERVICE LINE, PIPES OR WATER METERS FREEZE:

- Open a faucet near the frozen point to release vapor from melting ice.
- Direct a hair dryer or heat lamp at the frozen section, or put a small space heater nearby.
- NEVER thaw a frozen pipe or meter with an open flame; this could lead to fire or cause a steam explosion.

HOW TO HELP OTHERS

- Infants, seniors, and people with paralysis or neuropathy are at increased risk of hypothermia and frostbite. Check on friends, relatives, and neighbors who may need assistance to ensure they are adequately protected from the cold.
- Community members that identify someone on the street they believe needs assistance should call 311 and ask for the Mobile Outreach Response Team. The Department of Homeless Services will send an outreach team to the location to assess the individual's condition and take appropriate action.
- Recognize symptoms of cold weather illnesses such as frostbite and hypothermia:
Hypothermia: symptoms include slurred speech, sluggishness, confusion, dizziness, shallow breathing, unusual behavior, and slow, irregular heartbeat.
Frostbite: symptoms include gray, white or yellow skin discoloration, numbness, and waxy feeling skin.
- If you suspect a person is suffering from frostbite or hypothermia, bring him or her someplace warm and seek medical help immediately or call 911.
- If medical help is unavailable, re-warm the person, starting at the core of their body. Warming arms and legs first can increase circulation of cold blood to the heart, which can lead to heart failure. Use a blanket, or if necessary, your own body heat to warm the person.
- Do not give a person suffering frostbite or hypothermia alcohol or caffeine, both of which can worsen the condition. Instead, give the patient a cup of warm broth.

