

Be Ready For Winter Storms

~ A message from your Regional Emergency Management Organization ~

Emergency preparedness begins at home. When individuals and families are prepared, there's less chance that they will need scarce community resources when an emergency occurs. With winter storms likely headed our way we would like to remind the public that it is important to be prepared for the possibility of weather impacts. For accurate updates check your local news and weather sources.

Step 1 Consider the impacts

As with any potential hazard or threat, you should create an individual and family emergency plan to help you Be Ready for such an event.

The impacts of a severe winter storm include:

- Unsafe travel conditions
- Widespread utility (power; phone; internet) disruptions
- School and business closures or early dismissals

Step 2 Prepare for the impacts

Emergency preparedness involves having a way to deal personally with the most likely impacts of an event.

To prepare for a winter storm consider:

- Listening to weather updates (local radio, T.V., environment Canada updates)
- Consider your travel requirements during the predicted storm period and revise plans if necessary (ex. plan to travel ahead of the storm to arrive safely, or delay travel until after the event)
- Make sure you are aware of the travel plans of other family members. If you do have to travel make sure you pre-arranged check-in plans to ensure someone will be aware if you don't arrive at your destination. Ensure you have an emergency kit available in your vehicle to deal with the possibility of being stranded on the road for an extended period of time.
- Consider how you could cope with being home (shelter-in-place) for 3 days or more, possibly without power, and ensure you have appropriate supplies. These supplies might include:
 - o Food supplies (ready to eat without cooking) for people and pets
 - o Drinking water
 - o Medicines and essential supplies
 - o Safe alternative heating sources or fuel
 - o Flashlights, batteries
 - o Battery operated radio
 - o Telephone that doesn't require power to be functional (non- portable phone)
 - o Family entertainment (games, books, puzzles)

- Check on family members and neighbors prior to the event, particularly if they rely on you or you on them, for assistance
- Charge all battery operated devices such as cell phones, laptops, and radios

Step 3 Talk about your plan

Emergency plans should be shared. Talk to all your family members about what you plan to do, what you might need help with, and how they can help. Make sure everyone knows where your emergency supplies are. Talk to neighbors and relatives and your contacts to ensure they would be able to provide what you are counting on them for!

Step 4 During the storm

Once a storm begins, put your emergency plan into action by:

- Staying off the roads until it is safe to do so
- Listen to radio updates from emergency officials
- Check on neighbors and relatives within walking distance or by phone
- Notify the Nova Scotia power outage line (1-877-428-6004) if you lose your power
- Practice safety measures if using candles, alternative heat sources, and generators. Make sure you have good ventilation and don't leave devices with open flames unattended.

Being prepared means you don't have to be scared. Once you know how you and your family could cope and you have the supplies you need, relax in the knowledge that you have done what you can.

The Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office website, www.gov.ns.ca/emo provides useful information on how to prepare a home and car emergency kit.