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Are You Ready?

A Preparedness Newsletter for Residents of Montgomery County, MD

Four Steps to Prepare for Winter Storms

Winter is right around the corner. Even though we may enjoy watching the snow fall from the comfort of our homes, it's important to take steps to make sure we're ready for potential winter storms.

1. Make sure your emergency kit is stocked with water, non-perishable food, a radio, a flashlight, and extra batteries.
 - If you take prescription medication, include a few extra doses in case you are unable to leave your house to refill your prescription.
2. Heavy, wet snow has the potential to bring down tree limbs and power lines.
 - Have extra blankets and adequate clothing to keep you warm in case of a power outage.
 - If you need to go to a shelter, visit the county's website through a mobile browser or call 3-1-1 to get shelter locations.
3. Stay inside during the storm.
 - After the storm, travel only if absolutely necessary. Make sure someone else knows where you are going, and keep an emergency kit in the car.
 - If you walk, go slowly and watch for ice.
 - If you shovel your sidewalk or driveway, don't overexert yourself. Take your time, and dress in layers to ensure you stay warm.
4. Check on neighbors who may need extra assistance.

For more information on winter preparedness, visit the [OEMHS winter preparedness page](#).

Take Advantage of Family Time Together to Prepare

December is a time when many families get together to enjoy each other's company. What better opportunity to ensure your family is prepared for an emergency?

Here are some things you can do as a family to prepare:

- Discuss potential hazards (such as tornadoes or floods) and how your family should respond to those hazards
- Talk about places to meet. Choose a place outside your home in case you need to

evacuate. Also, choose a place outside of your neighborhood in case you cannot return home.

- Make a list of items that should be in your emergency kit, and work together to assemble the kit. Make sure family members know where the kit is stored and who is responsible for checking the kit for expired food, water, and batteries.

The more a family works together to prepare, the better it will respond when a disaster strikes.

December's Preparedness Tip

Know how to respond if you're caught in your car during a winter storm

If you are caught in your car during a winter storm, stay in your vehicle. Run the motor for 10 minutes every hour for heat. Make sure your exhaust pipe is not blocked by the snow, and crack the window slightly to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.

To make yourself visible to rescuers, turn on your dome light when you run your heat. Tie a colored piece of cloth to your antenna or door to attract attention.

About Montgomery County OEMHS

The Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (OEMHS) coordinates disaster response activities, offers preparedness education for residents, develops and maintains response plans, coordinates exercises and mitigation activities, and runs the hazardous materials permitting program.

Learn about Hazards and Preparedness

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