

SNOW, ICE AND FREEZING TEMPERATURES

WHEEDLE WEATHER PREPAREDNESS TIP

Get up-to-the-minute school closure information for Western Washington at www.TakeWinterByStorm.org.



© S. COSGROVE 2012

Like heavy rainstorms and windstorms, different types of Northwest weather require different precautions. Today, let's take a look at how you can be prepared for snow, ice and freezing temperatures.

Freezing temperatures wreak havoc on the Northwest. Our hilly roads ice up and create dangerous driving situations for personal and public transportation. Snowstorms create a buildup of snow that is fun to play in, but hard to remove, which can cause treacherous driving conditions. We're not accustomed to extreme freezing temperatures, so we have to prepare ourselves and our homes. Below are some of the risks associated with freezing temperatures, snow and ice storms:

- Transportation routes severely affected and closed by snow-covered and iced-over roadways
- Public transportation may be re-routed to snow routes and/or have service cancellations
- Power outages due to snapped lines from frozen trees and limbs
- Damaged homes and buildings due to frozen pipes that can rupture and cause internal flooding as they thaw
- Freezing temperatures that cause discomfort if you are not properly clothed

TRAVEL SAFELY IN SNOW AND ICE

- Dress warmly and in layers, and wear footwear appropriate for the weather.
- When there's snow on the ground, don't travel unless you have to. Staying home will help keep you and others safe.
- If you have to drive, stay on the main roads and travel with a shovel, bag of sand and chains.
- During periods of ice or snow, transit service may be re-routed, canceled or delayed. Know your bus snow route, but expect delays and the possibility of waiting outdoors longer than you normally would.

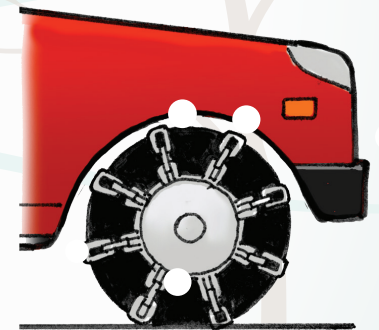


© S. COSGROVE 2012

- Bus riders should wait at bus stops at the top or bottom of hills, because buses are often unable to stop for passengers on inclines.
- Make a backup plan for using public transportation when travel conditions worsen. Check transportation agency websites for winter travel information.

BRRRR... HELP YOUR FAMILY GET READY FOR THE COLD!

- As temperatures drop, keep your vehicle gas tank at least half full.
- Gather and keep cold weather clothing and extra blankets handy at home and in your vehicle to use in an emergency to minimize heat loss.
- Keep portable heaters away from furniture, draperies and other flammable materials.
- Disconnect garden hoses and wrap outdoor pipes and faucets to keep them from freezing.
- When temperatures drop below 32°F, let warm water drip overnight, preferably from a faucet on an outside wall. A trickle of hot and cold water can prevent pipes from freezing.
- Open cabinet doors to allow heat to get to uninsulated pipes under sinks and appliances near exterior walls.
- Set the thermostat to no lower than 55°F (12°C).
- Clear your sidewalks of snow and ice with salt, deicer and/or shoveling to avoid injuries on your property.
- Keep snow buildup off surfaces that could collapse, such as rooftops.
- Before you leave your home for travel, ask a friend or neighbor to check your house daily to make sure it's warm enough to prevent freezing.



WHEEDLE WEATHER PREPAREDNESS TIP

Plan ahead! If you plan on traveling in snow and ice conditions, bring a preparedness kit with enough food, water, extra winter clothing and warm blankets for everyone in the vehicle, plus personal items and emergency supplies. Fill the vehicle gas tank before you leave. A short car ride could extend into multiple hours on the road without any backup.

For more winter weather preparedness tips, checklists and information, go to www.TakeWinterByStorm.org.