



**American
Red Cross**

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News Release
NEWS RELEASE

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Area residents encouraged to prepare for winter storm Safety tips offered by American Red Cross of Northern Nevada

RENO, NV (January 16, 2019)—As Northern Nevada prepares for the upcoming winter storm, the American Red Cross of Northern Nevada offers the following safety tips to ensure that area residents are well-protected against cold and snowy conditions.

Protecting Your Family

- Talk with your family about what to do if a winter storm watch or warning is issued. Discussing winter storms ahead of time helps reduce fear, particularly for young children.
- Have your vehicle winterized before the winter storm season to decrease your chance of being stranded in cold weather.
- Have a mechanic check your battery, antifreeze, wipers and windshield washer fluid, ignition system, thermostat, lights, flashing hazard lights, exhaust system, heater, brakes, defroster, and oil.
- Install good winter tires with adequate tread. All-weather radials are usually adequate, but some jurisdictions require vehicles to be equipped with chains or snow tires with studs.
- Keep in your vehicle: - A windshield scraper and small broom - A small sack of sand for generating traction under wheels and a set of tire chains or traction mats - Matches in a waterproof container - A brightly colored (preferably red) cloth to tie to the antenna - An emergency supply kit, including warm clothing.
- Keep your vehicle's gas tank full so you can leave right away in an emergency and to keep the fuel line from freezing.
- Keep a supply of non-clumping kitty litter to make walkways and steps less slippery.
- Service snow removal equipment before the winter storm season and maintain it in good working order.
- Keep handy a warm coat, gloves or mittens, hat, water-resistant boots, and extra blankets and warm clothing for each member of the household.

Protecting Your Pets and Animals

- Bring your companion animals indoors. - Ensure that you have supplies for clean-up for your companion animals, particularly if they are used to eliminating outdoors (large plastic bags, paper towels, and extra cat litter).
- Create a place where your other animals can be comfortable in severe winter weather: - Horses and livestock should have a shelter where they can be protected from wind, snow, ice, and rain. - Grazing animals should have access to a protected supply of food and non-frozen water.
- Be aware of the potential for flooding when snow and ice melt and be sure that your animals have access to high ground that is not impeded by fencing or other barriers. You may not be able to get to them in time to relocate them in the event of flooding. - Ensure that any outbuildings that house or shelter animals can withstand wind and heavy snow and ice- Install snow fences in rural areas to reduce drifting snow on roads and paths, which could block access to homes, barns, and animals' feed and water.

Protecting Your Home

- Make sure your home heating sources are installed according to local codes and permit requirements and are clean and in working order.
- Make sure your home is properly insulated. Caulk and weather-strip doors and windowsills to keep cold air out.
- Install storm windows or cover windows with plastic from the inside to provide an extra layer of insulation to keep cold air out.
- Consider buying emergency heating equipment, such as a wood- or coal-burning stove or an electric or kerosene heater. - Stoves must be properly vented and in good working order. Dispose of ashes safely. Keep a supply of wood or coal on hand. - Electric space heaters, either portable or fixed, must be certified by an independent testing laboratory. Plug a heater directly into the wall socket rather than using an extension cord and unplug it when it is not in use. - Use a kerosene heater only if permitted by law in your area; check with your local fire department. Use only the correct fuel for your unit. Properly ventilate the area. Refuel the unit outdoors only, and only when the unit is cool. Follow all the manufacturer's instructions.
- Consider storing sufficient heating fuel. Regular fuel sources may be cut off. Be cautious of fire hazards when storing any type of fuel.
- If you have a fireplace, consider keeping a supply of firewood or coal. Be sure the fireplace is properly vented and in good working order and that you dispose of ashes safely.
- Consider installing a portable generator, following our safety tips to avoid home fires and carbon monoxide poisoning
- Consider purchasing flood insurance, if you live in a flood-prone area, to cover possible flood damage that may occur during the spring thaw. Homeowners' policies do not cover damage from floods. Ask your insurance agent about the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) if you are at risk. More information on NFIP is available at www.fema.gov/nfip.

Before the Storm Arrives

If you do nothing else:

- Listen to local area radio, NOAA radio or TV stations for the latest information and updates.
- Be prepared to evacuate if you lose power or heat and know your routes and destinations. Find a local emergency shelter.
- Check emergency kit and replenish any items missing or in short supply, especially medications and medical supplies. Keep it nearby.
- Be sure you have ample heating fuel.
- If you have alternative heating sources, such as fireplaces, wood- or coal-burning stoves, or space heaters, be sure they are clean and in working order.
- Bring your companion animals inside and ensure that your horses and livestock have blankets if appropriate and unimpeded access to shelter, food, and non-frozen water.

Download the FREE Emergency App

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About the American Red Cross:

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies about 40 percent of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit redcross.org or cruzrojaamericana.org, or visit us on Twitter at @RedCross.