
A WINTER STORM in New England can range from moderate snowfall over a few hours to a Nor'easter, bringing blizzard conditions with blinding, wind-driven snow that lasts several days. People can become stranded in their automobiles or trapped at home, without utilities or other services. The aftermath of a winter storm can have an impact on a community or the entire region for days, weeks or even months.

Keep your cell phone and laptop charged; stay tuned for messages from the University about safety precautions and/or cancellations.

If classes and/or activities are not cancelled, be careful on icy sidewalks and steps. Avoid driving.

Dress in layers.

If there are cancellations, try to stay indoors.

If public transportation is not running normally or in the case of a severe storm, consider staying with a friend instead of returning to your residence.

Check for notifications about re-openings.

Consider changing your travel plans.

After

Walk on shoveled paths. Be careful of icy sidewalks; avoid walking under tree limbs or power lines.

Report any problems with your heat and/ or windows by filing a Work Order through your Agora Portal.

At Home

Before

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.

Keep fire extinguishers on hand and make sure everyone knows how to use them.

Make sure your home is properly insulated. Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows to keep cold air out.

Install storm windows or cover windows with plastic from the inside to provide insulation.

To keep pipes from freezing, wrap them in insulation or layers of newspapers, covering the newspapers with plastic to keep out moisture.

Let faucets drip a little to avoid freezing. Know how to shut off water valves.

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.

During

Check on elderly or disabled relatives and/or neighbors. Also, consider your pets.

Be careful when shoveling snow. Over-exertion can bring on a heart attack – a major cause of death in the winter.

After

Make sure backup generators and alternative heating sources are well ventilated.

Help dig out fire hydrants and storm drains in your neighborhood.

Be aware of children playing in the streets, particularly climbing on or running out from behind large snowdrifts. Parents should remind their children to be aware of plowing operations and traffic.

Take your time shoveling

Auto Safety Steps

About 70% of winter deaths related to snow and ice occur in automobiles.

Keep your gas tank full and check your windshield wiper fluid.

Install good winter tires with adequate tread. Ensure your vehicle is maintained and in good working order.

Keep a windshield scraper, small broom and shovel for ice and snow removal.

Suggested items for a [Winter Emergency Car Kit](#) include a flashlight with extra batteries, a basic first-aid kit, necessary medications, a pocket knife, booster cables, a blanket or a sleeping bag, extra clothes (including rain gear, mittens and socks), non-perishable foods, a non-electric can opener, sand for generating vehicle traction, tire chains or traction mats, a basic tool kit (pliers, wrench, screwdriver), a tow rope, a container of water and a brightly colored cloth to serve as a flag, if necessary.

Plan long trips carefully, listening to the radio or television for the latest weather forecasts and road conditions. If bad weather is forecast, drive only if absolutely necessary.

Travel during daylight hours, keep others informed of your schedule, route and if possible, take another person with you. Stay on main roads; avoid back road shortcuts.

If a blizzard traps you in your car, pull off the highway. Turn on hazard lights and hang a distress flag from your radio antenna or window.

Remain in your vehicle where rescuers are more likely to find you. Do not set out on foot, unless you can see a building close by where you know you can take shelter.

Run the engine and heater about 10 minutes each hour to keep warm. When the engine is running, open the window slightly for ventilation. Periodically clear snow from the exhaust pipe.

Exercise to maintain body heat, but avoid overexertion. In extreme cold, use road maps, seat covers and floor mats for insulation. Huddle with passengers.

Take turns sleeping. One person should be awake at all times to look for rescue crews.

Drink fluids to avoid dehydration.

Be careful not to waste battery power. Balance electricity energy needs: the use of lights, heat and radio.

At night, turn on the inside light so work crews and rescuers can see you.

Additional Winter Weather Preparedness Information:

Boston College Emergency Management www.bc.edu/emergency

American Red Cross www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/winter-storm

Mass Emergency Management Agency www.mass.gov/mema

Federal Emergency Management Agency www.ready.gov/winter-