

Winter Safety Tips

Brighton Volunteer Ambulance

Winter weather calls for preparation. Getting your car and home ready for winter is a lot easier to do now than in the deep freeze ahead.

Checklist for your Car

Winter driving is hazardous—plan ahead for dangerous winter travel.

Avoid traveling on ice-covered roads, overpasses, and bridges if at all possible. Be cautious about travel (be sure to have winter emergency supplies in your car before you leave.) If you are stranded, it is safest to stay in your car.

Winter Car Maintenance

Keep your car in good working order and always try to have at least half a tank of gas at all times. Also, replace old windshield wiper blades to be sure they do a good job of cleaning snow and road salt and add wintertime mixture of windshield wiper fluid. Have your car serviced to check:

- Heater
- Defroster
- Brakes & brake fluid
- Antifreeze
- Battery
- Emergency flashers
- Tires (tread wear and tire pressure)
- Fuel
- Oil
- Radiator

CDC's Suggested Emergency Supply Kit for Your Car

- Cell phone; portable charger and extra batteries
- Shovel
- Windshield scraper
- Battery-powered radio (and extra batteries)
- Flashlight (and extra batteries)
- Water
- Snack food
- Extra hats, coats, mittens
- Blankets
- Chains or rope
- Tire chains
- Canned compressed air with sealant (emergency tire repair)
- Road salt and sand or kitty litter
- Booster cables

- Emergency flares
- Bright colored flag; help signs
- First aid kit
- Tool kit
- Waterproof matches and a can (to melt snow for water)
- Paper towels

Checklist for your Home

Winter months are the most deadly for fires. The increased risk in winter is due In part to more cooking and heating fires, holiday decorations, winter storms, and use of alternative heating sources such as kerosene heaters and wood stoves. If there is a fire, **call 9-1-1 immediately**, waiting may cause a much larger fire.

- Replace batteries in your smoke detectors and CO₂ detectors.
- Only use fireplaces, wood stoves, or other combustion heaters if they are properly
 vented to the outside and do not leak flue gas into the indoor air space. (Electric, plugin heaters can generally be used without venting.)
- If you're using space heaters, wood stoves, or other heat-producing objects maintain at least three feet of clearance between combustibles and your heat source.
- Never use a charcoal or gas grill indoors—the fumes are deadly.
- Don't leave heaters on when you leave the room or go to sleep, and never leave your children or pets alone near these heat sources.
- Plug heat sources directly into the wall, rather than into a power strip or extension cord so you won't overload electrical circuits.
- If you use a chimney, have it inspected annually and cleaned when needed. Be sure the ashes are cool before disposing, and use a metal container with a tightly fitted lid to store ashes. Ashes can take up to four days to cool down, so keep the container away from the house, deck, porch or anything that can burn!
- If you use a kerosene heater, avoid overfilling and never fill while it is operating or hot.
- Never leave lit candles unattended.

Weather emergencies

- Listen to the weather forecasts and know what winter storm warning terms mean:
 - Winter Weather Advisory: Expect winter weather conditions to cause inconvenience and hazards.
 - Winter Storm Watch: Be alert; a storm is likely.
 - Winter Storm Warning: Take action: the storm is in or entering the area.
 - **Blizzard Warning:** Seek refuge immediately! Snow and strong winds, near-zero visibility, deep snowdrifts, and life-threatening wind chill.
- Compile a Home Emergency Supply Kit The full supply list can be found here: (link to article)
- In case of power outage, have a battery-powered radio (for listening to local emergency instructions) with extra batteries.

Learn more at http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/beforestorm/supplylists.asp

This information comes from Brighton Volunteer Ambulance, 1551 Winton Road South, Rochester, N.Y. 14618, (585) 271-2718, www.brightonambulance.org or follow us on Facebook.

Brighton Volunteer Ambulance (BVA), a nonprofit independent volunteer ambulance service, provides advanced and basic life support emergency medical services to Brighton residents. BVA also provides community education in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), the use of automatic external defibrillators (AED) and other EMS related services. To learn more, visit www.brightonambulance.org