

When a winter storm strikes, the best thing to do is take shelter inside of your home or another building and avoid travel. Unfortunately, there are times when this is not always possible. Below are safety tips to follow if you are inside, outside, or stranded in your vehicle during a winter storm.

Remember to avoid overexertion, such as shoveling heavy snow, pushing a car, or walking in deep snow. The strain from the cold and the hard labor may cause a heart attack.

In addition, perspiration could lead to a chill and hypothermia. It is a good idea to take CPR training, so you can respond quickly to potential winter weather emergencies.

If Indoors

Stay inside!

When using an alternate heat source, such as a fireplace, wood stove, or space heater, make sure to use safeguards and properly ventilate. Have a fire extinguisher available.

If no heat is available:

- Close off rooms that are not needed.
- Stuff towels or rags in cracks under doors or around windows.
- Cover the windows at night.
- Be sure to eat and drink. Food provides the body with energy for producing its own heat.

Keep the body replenished with fluids to prevent dehydration.

• Wear layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing. Remove layers to avoid overheating, perspiration, and subsequent chill.

If Caught Outdoors

Find shelter!

- Try to stay dry.
- Cover all exposed body parts.

If no shelter is available:

- Build a lean-to, windbreak, or snow cave for protection from the wind.
- Build a fire for heat and to attract attention. Place rocks around the fire to absorb and reflect heat.
- Melt snow for drinking water.

If caught inside a vehicle:

Stay inside your vehicle – and don't panic.

- Attempting to walk for help in a winter storm can be a deadly decision. You could become quickly disorientated in wind-driven snow and cold.
- Run the motor about 10 minutes each hour for heat, but make sure to open a window a bit for fresh air to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Make sure the exhaust pipe is not blocked.
- Occasionally, vigorously move your arms, legs, fingers, and toes to keep blood circulating and to keep warm.

Be visible to rescuers:

- Turn on the dome light at night when running the engine.
- Tie a colored cloth to your antenna or door.
- After snow stops falling, raise the hood to indicate you need help.

