



Yadkin County Fire Marshal's Office



January

Prevention Bulletin

2025



Home fires occur more in winter than in any other season. As you stay cozy and warm this winter, be fire smart!



Half of all home heating fires occur in December, January and February.



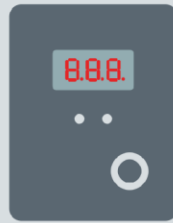
1 in every 7 home fires and 1 in every 5 home fire deaths involves heating equipment.



Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet from any heat source like fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators or space heaters.



Keep portable generators outside, away from windows, and as far away from your home as possible.



Install and test carbon monoxide alarms at least once a month.



Plug only 1 heat-producing appliance (like a space heater) into an electrical outlet at a time.



Have a qualified professional clean and inspect your chimney and vents every year.



Store cooled ashes in a tightly covered metal container, and keep it outside at least 10 feet from your home and any nearby buildings.



Fire Safety during Winter Storms

Winter storms can happen almost anywhere. They can cause us problems. Know what to do before, during and after a storm. This will help keep you and your family safe from a winter fire.

- » Test all smoke alarms. Do this at least once a month. This way you will know they are working. Install carbon monoxide alarms in your home. Test the alarms.
- » Plan two ways out of the home in case of an emergency. Clear driveway and front walk of ice and snow. This will provide easy access to your home.
- » Make sure your house number can be seen from the street. If you need help, firefighters will be able to find you.
- » Be ready in case the power goes out. Have flashlights on hand. Also have battery-powered lighting and fresh batteries. Never use candles.
- » Stay aware of winter weather. Listen to the television or radio for updates. Watch for bulletins online.
- » Check on neighbors. Check on others who may need help.
- » Generators should be used outdoors. Keep them away from windows and doors. Do not run a generator inside your garage, even if the door is open.
- » Stay away from downed wires. Report any downed wires to authorities.
- » Be ready if the heat stops working. Use extra layers of clothes and blankets to stay warm. If you use an emergency heat source, keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet away.
- » Turn portable heaters off when you leave the room. Turn them off when you go to bed.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

There are more home fires in winter than in any other season. Half of all home heating fires happen in December, January and February.

As you stay cozy and warm this winter season, be fire smart!



Fact

Nearly half of all space heater fires involve electric space heaters.

Carbon Monoxide Safety



Often called the invisible killer, carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels (such as gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, oil, and methane) burn incompletely. In the home, heating and cooking equipment that burn fuel can be sources of carbon monoxide.

- CO alarms should be installed in a central location outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home and in other locations where required by applicable laws, codes or standards. For the best protection, interconnect all CO alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for placement and mounting height.
- Choose a CO alarm that is listed by a qualified testing laboratory.
- Call your local fire department's non-emergency number to find out what number to call if the CO alarm sounds.
- Test CO alarms at least once a month; replace them according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- If the audible trouble signal sounds, check for low batteries. If the battery is low, replace it. If it still sounds, call the fire department.
- If the CO alarm sounds, immediately move to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window or door. Make sure everyone inside the home is accounted for. Call for help from a fresh air location and stay there until emergency personnel declare that it is safe to re-enter the home.
- If you need to warm a vehicle, remove it from the garage immediately after starting it. Do not run a vehicle or other fueled engine or motor indoors, even if garage doors are open. Make sure the exhaust pipe of a running vehicle is not covered with snow.
- During and after a snowstorm, make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove, and fireplace are clear of snow build-up.
- A generator should be used in a well-ventilated location outdoors away from windows, doors and vent openings.
- Gas or charcoal grills can produce CO — only use outside.

HOME HEATING EQUIPMENT



Have fuel-burning heating equipment and chimneys inspected by a professional every year before cold weather sets in. When using a fireplace, open the flue for adequate ventilation. Never use your oven to heat your home.

FACTS

- ! A person can be poisoned by a small amount of CO over a longer period of time or by a large amount of CO over a shorter amount of time.
- ! In 2010, U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated 80,100 non-fire CO incidents in which carbon monoxide was found, or an average of nine calls per hour.



NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION
The leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards

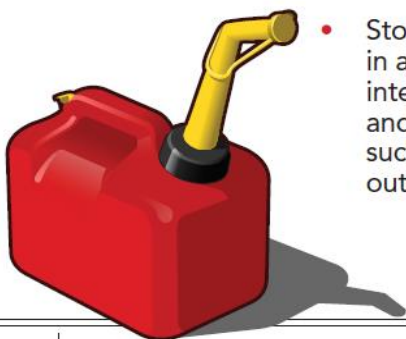




Generator Safety

Downed utility lines, power company blackouts, heavy snow falls or summer storms can all lead to power outages. Many people turn to a portable generator for a temporary solution without knowing the risks.

- Generators should be used in well ventilated locations outside at least 5 feet away from all doors, windows, and vent openings. Measure the 5-foot distance from the generator exhaust system to the building.
- Never use a generator in an attached garage, even with the door open.
- Place generators so that exhaust fumes can't enter the home through windows, doors or other openings in the building. The exhaust must be directed away from the building.
- Make sure to install carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in your home. Follow manufacturer's instructions for correct placement and mounting height.
- Turn off generators and let them cool down before refueling. Never refuel a generator while it is hot.



- Store fuel for the generator in a container that is intended for the purpose and is correctly labeled as such. Store the containers outside of living areas.

Just Remember...

When plugging in appliances, make sure they are plugged directly into the generator or a heavy duty outdoor-rated extension cord. The cords should be checked for cuts, tears and that the plug has all three prongs, especially a grounding pin.

If you must connect the generator to the house wiring to power appliances, have a qualified electrician install a properly rated transfer switch in accordance with the National Electrical Code® (NEC) and all applicable state and local electrical codes.

FACT

- ! CO deaths associated with generators have spiked in recent years as generator sales have risen.



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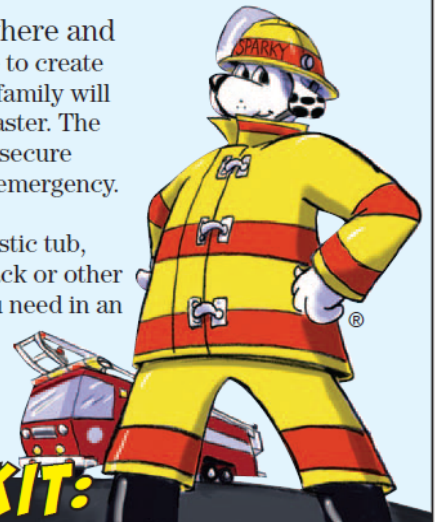




GET READY!

Disasters can happen anywhere and at any time. By taking the time to create an emergency supplies kit, your family will be prepared in the event of a disaster. The kit also helps children feel more secure knowing it is there in case of an emergency.

The supplies can be kept in a plastic tub, small suitcase, trash can, backpack or other container. To learn what else you need in an emergency supplies kit, go to www.ready.gov.



EMERGENCY SUPPLIES KIT:

Sparky® is a registered trademark of the NFPA.

- Water – one gallon per person per day for drinking and sanitation — store 3-day supply
- Ready-to-eat food, canned juices, comfort/stress foods — at least a 3-day supply
- Battery-powered or hand-cranked radio and a NOAA weather radio, and extra batteries for both
- Flashlights and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Non-prescription drugs such as pain reliever, anti-diarrhea medication, antacid, laxative
- Prescription medications, contact lenses and supplies, denture needs
- Whistle to signal for help
- Infant formula and diapers, if you have an infant
- Water and pet food if you have pets
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Dust mask or cotton t-shirt to filter the air
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food
- Aluminum foil
- A jacket or coat, hat and gloves
- A complete change of clothing including long pants, long sleeve shirt, and sturdy shoes stored in a waterproof container.
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
- Rain gear
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates and plastic utensils
- Cash or traveler's checks, change
- Paper towels
- Tent
- Compass
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Signal flare
- Paper, pencil
- Personal hygiene items
- Soap
- Disinfectant and household chlorine bleach
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container. Remember to include emergency contact numbers.
- Passport, bank account numbers, credit card account numbers and companies
- Books, games puzzles, portable music device

NOTE: Replace food every six months. Re-think your kit and family needs once a year. Replace batteries and update clothes, etc.

My Personal Pack Checklist

Have children create their personal pack. Have them include things like their favorite book or stuffed animal. These familiar things will help keep them comfortable during an emergency.

- ✓ Change of clothes
- ✓ Blanket
- ✓ Books
- ✓ Favorite toy
- ✓ Paper, pencils and crayons



HOW TO STAY SAFE WHEN A WINTER STORM THREATENS



Know your area's risk for winter storms. Extreme winter weather can leave communities without utilities or other services for long periods of time.

Prepare your home to keep out the cold with insulation, caulking, and weather stripping. Learn how to keep pipes from freezing. Install and test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors with battery backups.

Pay attention to weather reports and warnings of freezing weather and winter storms. Sign up for your community's warning system. The Emergency Alert System (EAS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio also provide emergency alerts.

Gather supplies in case you need to stay home for several days without power. Keep in mind each person's specific needs, including medication. Do not forget the needs of pets. Have extra batteries for radios and flashlights.

Create an emergency supply kit for your car. Include jumper cables, sand, a flashlight, warm clothes, blankets, bottled water, and non-perishable snacks. Keep the gas tank full.

Learn to identify the signs of and basic treatments for frostbite and hypothermia. For more information, visit: www.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/staysafe/index.html.



Stay off roads if at all possible. If trapped in your car, stay inside.

Limit your time outside. If you need to go outside, wear layers of warm clothing. Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.

Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Only use generators and grills outdoors and away from windows. Never heat your home with a gas stovetop or oven.

Reduce the risk of a heart attack. Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow.

Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia and begin treatment right away.

Check on neighbors. Older adults and young children are more at risk in extreme cold.



Frostbite causes loss of feeling and color around the face, fingers, and toes.

- **Signs:** Numbness, white or grayish-yellow skin, and firm or waxy skin
- **Actions:** Go to a warm room. Soak in warm water. Use body heat to warm. Do not massage or use a heating pad.

Hypothermia is an unusually low body temperature. A temperature below 95 degrees is an emergency.

- **Signs:** Shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech, and drowsiness.
- **Actions:** Go to a warm room. Warm the center of the body first—chest, neck, head, and groin. Keep dry and wrapped up in warm blankets, including the head and neck.

Take an Active Role in Your Safety

Go to Ready.gov/winter-weather. Download the **FEMA app** to get more information about preparing for a **winter storm**.



Stay Safe on Winter Roads

Whether it's snow, sleet or ice, winter weather can cause extremely dangerous road conditions. In 2022 there were 498 fatal traffic crashes, and an estimated 32,213 injury crashes that occurred when there were snow/sleet conditions at the time of the crash. Preparing yourself – and your vehicle – for winter weather is key.

Follow these and other tips for driving in winter conditions from the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) (NHTSA):

- Drive slowly. It is harder to control or stop your vehicle on a slick or snow-covered surface. Increase your following distance so that you will have plenty of time to stop for vehicles ahead of you.
- Know what kind of brakes your vehicle has and how to use them properly. If you have antilock brakes, apply firm, continuous pressure. If you do not have antilock brakes, pump the brakes gently.
- If you find yourself in a skid, stay calm and ease your foot off the gas while carefully steering in the direction you want the front of your vehicle to go. Continue to stay off the pedals (gas and brake) until you can regain control of your vehicle.

Navigating Around Snow Plows

- Do not crowd a snow plow or travel beside it. Snow plows travel slowly, make wide turns, stop often, overlap lanes, and exit the road frequently.
- The road behind an active snow plow is safer to drive on because it is clear.
- When you drive behind a snow plow, do not follow, or stop too closely. Snowplows can throw up a cloud of snow that can reduce your visibility to zero in less time than you can react. Never drive into a snow cloud – it can conceal vehicles or hazards.

Learn more about winter driving with the NHTSA's [Winter Driving Tips](#).





Winter Travel



Road Trip Safety Tips

SHARE YOUR TRAVEL PLANS WITH FRIENDS OR FAMILY

PACK AN EMERGENCY SUPPLY KIT

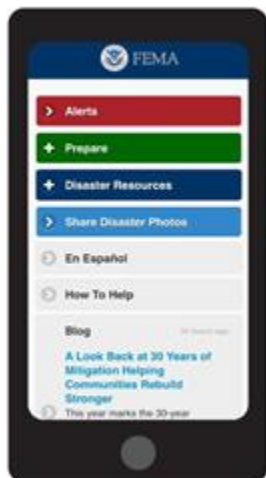
WINTERIZE YOUR VEHICLE

CHECK ROAD CONDITIONS

GET THE WEATHER FORECAST



Got a new tablet or smartphone? Visit <https://www.fema.gov/mobile-app> to download emergency preparedness apps and set up the emergency contact feature on your phone.



Receive **real-time alerts** from the National Weather Service for up to five locations nationwide.



Learn **emergency safety tips** for over 20 types of disasters, including earthquakes, fires, hurricanes, tornadoes and more.



Locate open **emergency shelters** in your area and find **disaster recovery centers** where you can talk to FEMA in person.



Toggle between **English** and **Spanish**.



Ways to prevent falling on the ice

Many cold-weather injuries result from falls on ice-covered sidewalks, steps, driveways and porches.

Try these tips to keep yourself on your feet this winter.



When it's icy, don't go out if you don't have to.



Use ice melt or sand on your sidewalks and driveways. If you don't have any, try non-clumping kitty litter.



Wear footwear that can grip the ice, or detachable ice cleats.



Wear gloves, a hat and a bulky coat, which can cushion a fall.



Be aware of your surroundings. If it looks icy, avoid that area if at all possible.



If you must walk on ice, slow down and shorten your stride. Keep your hands out of your pockets to help with balance, and use handrails wherever available.



Don't carry things in front of you. Wear a backpack, or hold items down by your sides to keep your view unobstructed and to lower your center of gravity.



When getting out of your vehicle, use multiple points of contact. Grip your car's door frame and either your steering wheel or the grab handle on your car's frame.



Do exercises that work on your balance, such as yoga, Pilates and tai chi.



Winter Weather Tips

for your four-legged friends!

It's a common belief that dogs and cats are resistant than people to cold weather because of their fur, but it's untrue. Like people, cats and dogs are susceptible to frostbite and hypothermia.

1. Keep Pets Inside

Longer-haired and thick-coated dog breeds, such as huskies and other dogs bred for colder climates, are more tolerant of cold weather; but no pet should be left outside for long periods of time in below-freezing weather.



2. Provide Choices

Just like you, pets prefer comfortable sleeping places and may change their location based on their need for more or less warmth. Give them some safe options to allow them to vary their sleeping place to adjust to their needs.

3. Make Some NOISE!

A warm vehicle engine can be an appealing heat source for outdoor and feral cats, but it's deadly. Check underneath your car, bang on the hood, and honk the horn before starting the engine to encourage feline hitchhikers to abandon their roost under the hood.

4. Play Dress Up!

If your dog has a short coat or seems bothered by the cold weather, consider a sweater or dog coat. Have several on hand, so you can use a dry sweater or coat each time your dog goes outside. Wet sweaters or coats can actually make your dog colder. Some pet owners also use booties to protect their dog's feet; if you choose to use them, make sure they fit properly.

5. Provide Shelter

We don't recommend keeping any pet outside for long periods of time, but if you are unable to keep your dog inside during cold weather, provide them with a warm, dry, solid shelter against wind. If you're able to, consider providing shelters for stray cats in the neighborhood.



6. Be Prepared

Cold weather also brings the risks of severe winter weather, blizzards and power outages. Prepare a disaster/emergency kit, and include your pet in your plans. Have enough food, water and medicine (including any prescription medications as well as heartworm and flea/tick preventives) on hand to get through at least 5 days.



thatpetplace.com

Information provided by the AVMA at <https://www.avma.org/public/PetCare/Pages/Cold-weather-pet-safety.aspx>

Mind your head.

When working outdoors, wear a hardhat to protect your head against falling snow or ice and in the event that you slip on icy surfaces.



Drive with extra care.



Equip your car with good snow tires with plenty of tread. Slow down and maintain a greater distance between your vehicle and traffic ahead.

Stay warm.

Learn the dangers of hypothermia and frostbite. In cold weather conditions, consider the wind chill factor, dress warmly in layers and take frequent warm-up breaks.



Make yourself visible.

Wear a reflective vest and carry a flashlight when working or walking around trucks, heavy duty equipment or forklifts.



8 TIPS

FOR WORKING SAFELY IN WINTER



Be prepared.

Pack an emergency kit in your vehicle, including a fully charged cell phone, blankets, matches, a distress sign, flares, snacks, water, shovel, sand and first aid supplies.



Mop up.

Snow and ice can melt on floors inside workplace entrances, creating a slipping hazard. Post warning signs, place a doormat at each entrance and keep the floor areas clean and dry.



Breathe freely.



Never operate a gasoline-powered generator or fuel-burning heater indoors. If operating machinery with internal combustion engines, don't close the bay doors to conserve heat. It can result in carbon monoxide poisoning.

Don't skate over safety.

Keep outdoor walkways clear and sprinkled with sand. Wear slip-resistant footwear, take shorter steps and slow down when walking over slippery surfaces.



YADKIN COUNTY



EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Yadkin County Fire Marshal's Office is proud to serve the citizens of Yadkin County by promoting the importance of fire safety through education, inspections, and investigations. The Fire Marshal's Office functions under the direction of the emergency services director.

The Fire Marshal's Office is responsible for various duties, which include:

- County Fire Inspection Program
- Fire / arson investigations
- Budget preparation
- Coordination between county government and county fire departments
- Fire prevention programs
- Response to emergency situations

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