



MEMBER UPDATE

ReFresh

November 17, 2021



This week...

Winter Safety

The wind and rain of this week in the southwest corner of BC raised havoc. Our thoughts are with the folks who have been evacuated or who experienced flooding in their homes. We hope that everyone is safe. There was no way to prepare for the amount of rain we received over the past two days or even the past two weeks. However, this got us thinking... what can we do to prepare for a safe winter?

Our weather is certainly getting more extreme, and for many areas of our province, winter weather can be harsh. Winter storms and cold temperatures can be dangerous, which is why it is important to plan ahead to stay safe and healthy.

I found a great article online with a comprehensive safety checklist. Please see some of the highlights below, and for the entire checklist – [click here](#):

Prepare your house for the season

- Winterize your home. Examples include:
 - Insulate water lines that run along exterior walls
 - Add weather stripping and storm windows
- Check your heating systems:
 - Have your heating system serviced professionally
 - Have a safe alternate heating source and fuel available
- If you do not have a working smoke detector, install one. Test batteries monthly and replace them twice a year
- Install a carbon monoxide (CO) detector to alert you of the presence of the deadly, odorless, colorless gas. Check or change the battery when you change your clocks in the fall and spring
 - Learn the symptoms of CO poisoning: headache, dizziness, weakness, upset stomach, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion

Prepare Your Vehicle

- Keep the gas tank full to avoid ice accumulating in the tank and fuel lines
- Prepare a winter emergency kit to keep in your car in case you become stranded. The kit should include:
 - Cell phone, portable charger, and extra batteries
 - Items to stay warm, such as extra hats, coats, mittens, blankets, or sleeping bags
 - Food and water
 - Booster cables, flares, tire pump, and a bag of sand or cat litter (for traction)
 - Compass and maps
 - Flashlight, battery-powered radio, and extra batteries
 - First-aid kit
 - Plastic bags (for sanitation)

Prepare for weather-related emergencies, including power outages:

- Keep a stock of food that needs no cooking or refrigeration and ensure that you have water stored in clean containers
- Keep an up-to-date emergency kit, including:
 - Battery-operated devices, such as a flashlight, a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio, and lamps

- Extra batteries
- First-aid kit and extra medicine
- Baby items
- Cat litter or sand for icy walkways
- Protect your family from CO
 - Keep grills, camp stoves, and generators out of the house, basement, and garage

When planning travel, be aware of current and forecast weather conditions:

- Before you travel, inform a friend or relative of your proposed route and expected time of arrival
- Follow these safety rules if you become stranded in your vehicle:
 - Make your vehicle visible to rescuers. Tie a brightly colored cloth to the antenna, raise the hood (if it is not snowing), and turn on the inside overhead lights (when your engine is running)
 - Move anything you need from the trunk into the passenger area, so you don't have to continue to get out of your vehicle to retrieve items
 - Stay with your vehicle unless safety is no more than 100 yards away
 - Keep your body warm. Wrap your entire body, including your head, in extra clothing, blankets, or newspapers. Huddle with other people if you can
 - Stay awake and stay moving. You will be less vulnerable to cold-related health problems. As you sit, keep moving your arms and legs to improve circulation and stay warmer
 - Run the motor (and heater) for about 10 minutes per hour, opening one window slightly to let in air. Make sure that snow is not blocking the exhaust pipe—this will reduce the risk of CO poisoning

Be ready to check on family and neighbors who are especially at risk from cold weather hazards, including older adults and the chronically ill. If you have pets, bring them inside. If you cannot bring them inside, provide adequate, warm shelter, and unfrozen water for them to drink.

Be safe out there and keep warm!