

# With Winter Settling, Tips Prepare For Any Storm



*By Henry M. Holden*

In recent years, some of the most damaging storms strike long before the first day of winter. Think Hurricane Sandy in October 2012. And the crippling snowstorms in the waning days of winter such as **March 12-14, 1993** when a *Category five snowstorm* which was dubbed the “Storm of the Century. Snow blanketed more than half of New Jersey, with 20 to 30 inches in the far northern sections of the state. The National Weather Service reported the January 2016 blizzard dumped 33 inches in Morris Plains.

Whether it’s a snowstorm or a hurricane, being prepared to deal with the storm safely both before, during and its aftermath is strongly suggested.

While the kids may love having a day or more off from school, for adults winter weather means a sometimes-chaotic commute to or from work, or the stress of preparing for the storm.

The Morris County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) has put together a preparedness list of winter weather tips.

Before the storm hits, prepare the home.

Create a checklist. Include flashlights, fresh batteries, a first aid kit, enough prescription medications to last a week, food that doesn't need heating, a battery-operated radio, and cellphones with extra chargers. In addition to medication, have a supply of one gallon of water, per person, for a maximum of three days. Don't forget the four-legged family members. Make sure they have four or five days of food and water.

OEM Director Jeff Paul said when temperatures go below freezing, 32 degrees, snow and ice are a real possibility. One of the most important things to do especially for the elderly and those with health issues is to stay inside. This includes pets.

Paul says to avoid charcoal-burning devices, kerosene and other space heaters. These devices produce carbon monoxide, a silent killer that can happen without any obvious symptoms. For those using these heaters, make sure to have carbon monoxide alarms installed in the home; one near the furnace, one near the bedrooms and one in the rooms with a space heater. Replace the batteries in them at least once a year. Pick the same day every year, say Halloween.

Stay warm by wearing layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothes. If a power outage lasts overnight or into the later hours, use extra blankets and close all doors to seal the heat into one area of the home.

Prevent freezing pipes.

Freezing temperatures can cause major issues to the pipes in a home. Keep cabinet doors open to allow heat to get to uninsulated pipes under sinks and appliances on exterior walls. Everyone in the household should know how to shut off the water valves; if a pipe does burst, this could save a lot of money in the long run.

Any outside faucets should have an inside drain function to drain the water from the pipe. If not, buy a faucet bonnet which will cover the faucet and insulate it.

### **Prepare the vehicle.**

**Having a prepared** vehicle for the winter months is as important as home preparation. In the event of becoming stuck in a blizzard or white out conditions, or stranded on a back road, there are things that can be done. Pack a bag to keep in the trunk with warm clothes.



In addition to clothes, keep the gas tank as close to full as possible, will keep the fuel line from freezing. If stranded and must sit out the storm, carry two empty coffee cans, several candles, and a blanket. The lighted candles placed in the coffee cans will keep the inside air temperature just above freezing. Wrap up in a blanket and stay with the vehicle. One could easily get disoriented in the storm and wind up freezing to death. There will be road crews out even before the snows stop.

Paul's team also suggests taking the car for a full inspection. For example, have the tires checked. If tire treads are slowly wearing away, paying the price for new tires will be better than replacing a vehicle after an accident. Common replacements before winter should include windshield wipers, oil, fluids and air filters.

Keep a shovel, snow melt and an ice scraper in the vehicle as ice can be unpredictable. Keep a bag of kitty litter in the trunk for traction; sprinkling it underneath the tires can make them stop spinning.

### **Blackouts and brownouts.**

Partial or full power outages during major storm events are expected.

"Keep cash on hand," said Paul, "because banks and ATM machines depend on electricity to serve their purpose."

Avoid opening the refrigerator or freezer as much as possible. Make sure to have an emergency power supply for anyone who needs power for medical equipment.

Preparing a home and vehicle for the coming winter will not keep the snow away, but it will make a much safer winter.



*With Winter Settling, Tips Prepare For Any Storm added by new\_view\_media*

*([http://www.mypaperonline.com/author/new\\_view\\_media](http://www.mypaperonline.com/author/new_view_media)) on December 16, 2016*

**View all posts by new\_view\_media →**

**([http://www.mypaperonline.com/author/new\\_view\\_media](http://www.mypaperonline.com/author/new_view_media))**