

Winter Driving

Plan your travels and check the latest weather reports to avoid the storm. You can find out the latest road conditions by visiting the Wisconsin Department of Transportation travel info website at www.511wi.gov or by calling 511.

It is also important to check and winterize your vehicles before the winter season begins. Keep your gas tank at least half full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines. Carry a winter emergency kit in your vehicle that includes:

- * Blankets or sleeping bags
- * Flashlight with extra batteries
- * First-Aid Kit
- * Shovel, tools, booster cables and windshield scraper
- * High-calorie non-perishable food
- * Cell phone adapter
- * Sand or cat litter to use for traction

Winter Weather Facts

- * In the last five years Wisconsin has averaged 20,000 motor vehicle crashes during the winter months when roads are covered with ice, snow or slush.
- * On average, 60 people are killed and 6,000 injured each winter season in accidents when roads are ice, snow or slush covered.
- * Many crashes are caused by “driving too fast for current conditions.” Also, when the first blast of winter arrives, motorists often need to “re-learn” how to drive in slippery conditions.

WI Department of Transportation
National Weather Service



Be Prepared

Some of the dangers associated with winter storms include loss of heat, power and telephone service and a shortage of supplies. To help protect your family, now is the time to put together a home emergency supply kit. Here are some items to include:

- * Flashlights and extra batteries
- * Battery-powered NOAA Weather Radio and a commercial radio
- * Non-perishable food that requires no cooking and bottled water
- * First-aid supplies
- * Fire extinguisher, smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector
- * Extra medications and baby items
- * If you have an emergency heating source such as a fireplace or space heater -- make sure you have proper ventilation.
- * Make sure pets have plenty of food, water and shelter

For additional information, contact your county or tribal emergency management office.

Winter safety tips can also be found at the following websites:

www.weather.gov
readywisconsin.wi.gov

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Wisconsin's Winter Awareness Week is coordinated by the National Weather Service, Wisconsin Emergency Management and county and tribal emergency management offices.



Wisconsin's Winter Awareness Week

November 7-11, 2011



Winter Awareness Week

Are you ready for winter? November 7-11, 2011 is Winter Awareness Week in Wisconsin.

Winter storms are considered deceptive killers because most deaths are indirectly related to the storm. Examples of such deaths include traffic accidents on icy or snow-covered roads, prolonged exposure to the cold and

indoor carbon monoxide poisoning. It is important to start taking preventive measures for winter weather. Now is the time to winterize your car and home, make an emergency kit for your car, and be sure you have a NOAA Weather

Radio with fresh batteries. Additional winter weather tips and how to put together a winter emergency kit are available at the ReadyWisconsin website. In addition, there are numerous winter storm maps and history of Wisconsin's winter weather at: ReadyWisconsin.wi.gov.



Winter Weather Facts

* The coldest temperature reported during the 2010-2011 winter season was -37° F at Ladysmith on January 22, 2011.

* Greatest daily snowfall: 26 inches at Pell Lake in Walworth County on February 2, 2011.

Stay Informed

The National Weather Service (NWS) issues storm warning and watches. Here's what they mean and what you should do.

Winter Storm Watch—Winter storm conditions (heavy snow, sleet and freezing rain) are possible within the next 36-48 hours. Continue monitoring the weather forecast.

Winter Storm, Ice Storm, Heavy Snow or Heavy Sleet Warning—A significant winter event is occurring or will begin in the next 24 hours. Take necessary precautions—consider canceling travel plans.

Blizzard Warning— Winds that are 35 mph or greater, blowing snow with reduced visibility to 1/4 mile or less for a duration of at least 3 hours and dangerous wind chills are expected.

Wind Chill Advisory— Issued for wind chills between -20° F and -34° F combined with winds for three hours or more.

Wind Chill Warning— Issued for wind chills below -35° F or colder combined with winds for three hours or more.

Groundhog Day Blizzard

Between January 31 and February 2, 2011...parts of the state had snowfall totals between 12 and 33 inches with wind gusts between 40 and 65 miles per hour. Schools and businesses closed and thousands heeded warnings to stay home in the near-paralyzing event.



Keep Warm and Safe

Frostbite is damage to body tissue caused by extreme cold. A wind chill of -20° Fahrenheit (F) could cause frostbite in just 15 minutes or less. Frostbite causes a loss of feeling and a white or pale appearance in extremities such as fingers, toes, ear tips or the tip of the nose. If symptoms are detected—**Seek medical care immediately!**

Hypothermia is a condition that develops when the body temperature drops below 95° F. It is very deadly. Warning signs include uncontrollable shivering, disorientation, slurred speech and drowsiness. **Seek medical care immediately!**

Overexertion is dangerous. Cold weather puts an added strain on the heart. Unaccustomed exercise such as shoveling snow or pushing a car can bring on a heart attack or make an existing medical condition worse.

Pets also need extra care when the temperatures fall. They should be brought inside when the temperature reaches 30° with wind chill. Dogs and cats can get frost-bitten ears, nose and paws if left outside during bitter cold weather. Chemicals used to melt snow and ice can also irritate pets' paws, so be sure to keep anti-freeze, salt and other poisons away from pets as well.

