

Safety Circular

September 2021

TEXAS SNOW

PREPARATIONS:

During extremely cold weather or winter storms, staying warm and safe can be a challenge. Winter storms can bring cold temperatures, power failures, loss of communication services, and icy roads.

So many Texans were not prepared for the 2021 Winter Storm. For over a week in February 2021, Texas experienced a historic weather event. Freezing temperatures and the near collapse of the state's power grid resulted in millions of Texans losing power

To keep yourself and your loved ones safe, you should know how to prepare your home and your car *before* a winter storm hits.



Home Winter Preparedness Checklist



- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Select Foods
See Additional Checklist | <input type="checkbox"/> Warm Clothing
Hats, Mittens, Parkas, Boots | <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlights & Extra Batteries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disposable Dishware
Plates, Bowls, Utensils | <input type="checkbox"/> Extra Blankets | <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specialty Items
Medis, Infant Formula, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Matches
For Candles & Gas Fireplaces | <input type="checkbox"/> Cell Phone
Fully Charged |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Portable Radio
AM/FM/Wx Radio & Batteries | <input type="checkbox"/> Shovel/Snow Blower
Check condition & maintain | <input type="checkbox"/> Firewood
For Wood Fireplaces |



Car Winterization Checklist



- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Check Engine Fluid Levels
Oil, Coolant, Washer Fluid, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Inspect Tire Tread
Replace if Near Wear Limit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Test Battery
Replace if Necessary | <input type="checkbox"/> Install Snow Tires if You Own a Set |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use Deicing Washer Fluid
Clean Windshield at Low Temps | <input type="checkbox"/> Test Headlights & Taillights |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Switch to Synthetic Oil
Handles the Cold Better | <input type="checkbox"/> Add & Inspect Winter Survival Kit |



Home Winter Survival Food Checklist



- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canned Fruits and Vegetables
Requires a Manual Can Opener | <input type="checkbox"/> Bread and Condiments
Keep Bread Frozen to Last Longer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crackers, Nuts, Fruit Bars, Chips
High Energy Foods | <input type="checkbox"/> Cereal and Toaster Pastries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soups
Some Soups Require Water or Heating | <input type="checkbox"/> Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cookies and Hard Candy | <input type="checkbox"/> Bottled Water
1 gallon per person, per day (for at least 3 days) |



Car Winter Survival Kit Checklist



- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight & Extra Batteries | <input type="checkbox"/> Blankets/Sleeping Bag | <input type="checkbox"/> Extra Clothing
Hats, Mittens, Parkas, Boots |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kit | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Perishable Food
Granola Bars, Dried nuts, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Sand/Kitty Litter
Used for Traction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Snow Shovel | <input type="checkbox"/> Bottled Water | <input type="checkbox"/> Cell Phone & Charger |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ice Scraper with Brush | <input type="checkbox"/> Booster Cables | <input type="checkbox"/> Flares/Triangles & other Bright Objects |

Be Prepared, Stay Prepared:

Natural disasters damage thousands of homes and devastate the livelihoods of families every day. Be prepared before a winter storm hits by planning ahead. If you are in an area prone to winter weather, be sure to create a communication and disaster plan for your family ahead of time.

Know Your Risk : Sign up for your community's emergency warning system. The Emergency Alert System (EAS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio also provide emergency alerts.

Secure Documents: Remember to secure copies of important personal documents. Be sure to keep documents in a secure

location and take them with you if you need to evacuate.

Make Your Evacuation Plan:

Be familiar with the route and shelter locations. Discuss and practice drills for your evacuation plan with your family each year.

Warming Shelters: To find the closest warming shelter, please visit <https://tdem.texas.gov/warming-center/> or for information on additional assistance and resources call 2-1-1.

Listen to weather forecasts, and check your supplies: Listen to weather forecasts regularly and check your emergency supplies, including your emergency food and water supply, whenever you are expecting a winter storm or extreme cold. Even though we can't always predict extreme cold

in advance, weather forecasts can sometimes give you several days of notice to prepare.

Gather Supplies: Keep in mind each person's needs, gathering supplies for at least three days. Stock up on items such as food and water, non-perishable foods, first-aid supplies, prescriptions, pet supplies, flashlights and batteries. Don't forget to charge electronics you may need.

Protect Your Property: Shutter your home as needed, review your flood insurance policy (or sign up for one) and declutter drains and gutters. Most homeowner and renter insurance policies do not cover flood damage. A flood insurance policy generally does not take effect until 30 days after purchase, so be sure to maintain your policy.



Driving in the Snow:

The safest course of action is to stay off the road during severe weather. If you must travel, consider the following:

- Pay attention to local forecasts and guidance from local officials.
- Patience is a virtue; leave earlier and drive slower.
- Brake cautiously to prevent steering issues.
- Visibility is limited; use your headlights, wipers and defrosters to help see clearly.
- Turn off cruise control.

After an Accident:

Take a moment to assess the situation, and do not panic. Be aware of the traffic situation, and any other potential dangers, such as fire.

- Take photos of the scene, if it is safe to do so.
- Obtain information from the other parties involved in the accident.
 - * Name, address, contact information, driver's license, insurance information, and license plate numbers.
- Obtain contact information from any witnesses.
- If there are injuries, contact the local authorities.
 - * Take extra care when attempting to move an injured person; if possible, wait for an ambulance to arrive.
 - * If you have been injured in a car accident, it is important to stay calm. If possible, ensure that you are out of danger and not blocking any oncoming traffic. Call or wait for help, and do not attempt to move if you are unable to do so.
- Contact your insurance company to begin the claim process.

Create an emergency car kit:

It is best to avoid traveling, but if travel is necessary, keep the following in your car external icon:

- Cell phone, portable charger, and extra batteries
- Items to stay warm such as extra hats, coats, mittens, and blankets
- Windshield scraper
- Shovel
- Battery-powered radio with extra batteries
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Water and snack food
- First aid kit with any necessary medications and a pocket knife
- Tow chains or rope
- Tire chains
- Canned compressed air with sealant for emergency tire repair
- Cat litter or sand to help tires get traction, or road salt to melt ice
- Booster cables with fully charged battery or jumper cables
- Hazard or other reflectors
- Bright colored flag or help signs, emergency distress flag, and/or emergency flares
- Road maps
- Waterproof matches and a can to melt snow for water

Safety Circular

TDCJ Risk Management Department

Marvin Dunbar , Director

Administrative Review and Risk Management Division

Travis Turner, Deputy Director

Administrative Review and Risk Management Division

Vacant, Manager II

Risk Management

The Safety Circular, a publication of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Risk Management Department, is published monthly in an effort to promote and enhance risk management awareness on issues relating to TDCJ employees. Design and layout of the Safety Circular is performed by Kim Roberson, Risk Management. Comments, suggestions and safety related items are welcome.

Send suggestions to:

Kim Roberson

Risk Management

P.O. Box 99, Huntsville, Texas 77340

or, Kimberly.roberson1@tdcj.texas.gov

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References: ♦ tdcj.texas.gov ♦ cdc.gov ♦ texas2021.winterstorm.org ♦ weather.gov ♦ recovery.texas.gov ♦ dmv.com ♦