

**Orange County
Emergency Services**

www.readyorange.org

Winter storms are considered dangerous because of the extreme conditions that occur. Of all Winter deaths, 70% occur in cars and 20% are related to the cold.

Remember to add Winter additions to your emergency preparedness kit:

- Rock Salt and Sand
- Food that doesn't need to be prepared
- Battery powered lamps, NOT candles
- Winter clothes and extra blankets

Related Guides:

- After a Disaster
- Children and Disasters
- Fire Prevention
- General Preparedness
- Generator Usage
- Handling Stress
- Insurance
- Shelter Living
- Special Needs

To contact Emergency Services:

PO Box 8181,
Hillsborough, NC 27278

Telephone:
919-245-6100

Fax: 919-732-8130

24-hour Phone:
919-732-5063

Winter Storm Preparedness Guide

Before a Winter Storm: Check heating sources. Clean chimneys and have an emergency heat source available. Follow all manufacturer instructions and have a fire extinguisher handy. You can weatherproof your home by adding extra insulation, use weather-stripping on all doors and windows, cover windows in plastic or install storm windows. Trimming weak branches can prevent some from falling on homes.



This photo is of winter storm damages in Asheville, NC. Photo Credit: The Christian Science Monitor.

What Do I Do During a Winter Storm?

When Outside:

- Find shelter and stay dry
- Cover all exposed body parts
- If stranded or without shelter:
 - Prepare a lean-to, wind-break, or snow cave for protection from the wind
 - Build a fire for heat and to attract attention
 - Place rocks around the fire to absorb and reflect heat
 - *Melt snow before eating. Ice will lower your body temperature.*

At Home or in a Building:

- Stay inside.
- When using ALTERNATIVE HEAT (fireplace, space heater, etc.):
 - Use fire safeguards.
 - Properly ventilate.
 - Use a carbon monoxide detector.

If There is No Heat:

- Close off unneeded rooms and stuff towels or rags in door cracks
- Cover windows at night.
- Eat and drink to keep warm and hydrated.
- Wear layers of loose-fitting, light-weight, warm clothing, but remove to avoid overheating.

If Trapped in a Car:

- Stay in the vehicle. Run the motor about ten minutes per hour for heat:
 - Crack a window for fresh air to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.
 - Make sure the exhaust pipe is not blocked.

Make yourself visible to rescuers:

- Use the dome light when running the engine at night.
- Tie a colored cloth (preferably red) to the antenna or door.
- After snow stops, raise the hood to indicate trouble.

Circulate blood and keep warm by vigorously moving arms, legs, fingers, and toes.

After a Winter Storm, do not drive or travel until roads are clear.

Check on neighbors who may require assistance such as the elderly or disabled.

Do not overexert yourself shoveling snow or staying in the cold for too long. This is a major cause of heart attacks.