



Tips for Staying Safe and Healthy in a Winter Storm



News Release: December 29, 2016

Media Contact:

Vermont Department of Health
Communication Office
802-863-7281

Be prepared and know how to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning

BURLINGTON – With Vermont expecting its first Nor’easter of the season, state officials are urging Vermonters to take steps to stay safe before, during and after the storm.

Be prepared. Have sufficient heating fuel and emergency supplies on hand, such as batteries, flashlights and water.

Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow. Overexertion can bring on a heart attack—a major cause of death in the winter. Use caution, take breaks, push the snow instead of lifting it when possible, and lift lighter loads.

Minimize travel. If travel is necessary, keep a supply kit and blanket in your vehicle.

- If a blizzard traps you in your car, pull off the highway. Turn on hazard lights and hang a brightly colored distress flag/cloth from your radio antenna or window.
- Remain in your vehicle where rescuers are more likely to find you. Do not set out on foot, unless you can see a building close by where you know you can take shelter.
- Run the engine and heater about 10 minutes each hour to keep warm. When the engine is running, open the window slightly for ventilation. Keep exhaust pipe clear of snow.

Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide is an odorless and potentially deadly gas. Symptoms of CO poisoning are like the flu and include nausea, headache, and dizziness. *If you suspect CO poisoning, get out of the building and into fresh air immediately, and call or text 911.*

- Check that you have working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in your home!
- Keep heating vents clear of snow and ice. Blocked vents can lead to a buildup of deadly carbon monoxide. Drifting snow and snow falling off roofs can block vents unexpectedly.
- Never use an “improvised” heat source like grill or oven as they can be fire or carbon monoxide hazards.
- Never run a generator indoors. Ensure it is outside – far away from windows or any other area from which exhaust can vent back into a living area.

If you see a downed power line, leave it alone – always treat power lines as if they are live.

In an emergency, call or text 911. If you need to find a shelter, dial 2-1-1.

Stay informed

- Tuned in to local radio, TV and web services for emergency updates.

- Sign up to receive Vermont alerts at <http://vtalert.gov>
- Follow National Weather Service updates: <http://www.weather.gov/btv/>

For more information about staying safe before, during and after a snowstorm, visit <http://demhs.vermont.gov/preparedness/winter> and <https://www.ready.gov/winter-weather>

For health news, alerts and information - visit healthvermont.gov

Join us on [Facebook](#)

Follow us on [Twitter](#)

#

Vermont Department of Health | 108 Cherry Street | Burlington, VT 05402
Voice: 802-863-7200 | In Vermont 800-464-4343 | Fax: 802-865-7754 | TTY/TDD: Dial 711 first
Health Care Provider Infectious Disease Reporting: 802-863-7240 or 800-640-4374
| | | | [Web Browser](#)