



Winter Weather Preparedness Guide

South Dakota Office of Emergency Management

October 23, 2013

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OCTOBER 23 IS WINTER WEATHER PREPAREDNESS DAY

Winter Storms, especially blizzards, can be very dangerous! That's why October 23 is Winter Weather Preparedness Day. You'll learn how preparing before extremely cold, snowy weather can save your life. Information and activities in this guide will teach you tools for helping your family be ready in winter conditions.

Do you know what winter storm watches and warnings mean? If a Winter Storm Watch has been issued for your area, hazardous winter weather conditions like snow greater than 6 inches in 24 hours, winds gusting over 35 mph or visibilities less than a 1/4 mile are expected in the next 12 to 36 hours. A Winter Storm Warning means the conditions listed for the Watch exist. Try to stay indoors during a blizzard. If you

must go outside to check on animals or for another reason, be sure to dress warmly in loose fitting layers of clothing. Wear heavy gloves to protect your hands and heavy socks with boots that will not absorb water. Cover your mouth so that you don't breathe in freezing cold air that can damage your lungs. Keep your body dry and know the signs of hypo-thermia and frostbite.

If you're traveling when a winter storm is possible, then always bring emergency supplies with you; you can never predict when you might get stranded and need them. If stranded, make sure you stay in your vehicle. Run your vehicle about ten minutes every hour and open the windows a little for fresh air so you can avoid carbon monoxide

poisoning. Make yourself visible to rescuers by turning on the dome light at night, tie a colored cloth to your antenna and raise the hood after the snow stops falling.

If you are caught outside, find a dry shelter and cover all exposed parts of your body. If shelter is not available, 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. Do not eat snow, it will lower your body temperature; melt it first.



Get Winter Weather Preparedness Tips on Social Media

South Dakota's Office of Emergency Management is taking advantage of social media to spread messages on winter weather preparedness and winter storm conditions. In the past year, OEM has activated Facebook and Twitter accounts to extend its reach in messages important to public safety and disaster response and recovery. The value of social media mes-

saging has been shown several times since the accounts were activated. During an early-February blizzard, the number of OEM Twitter followers grew by 46 percent over the previous week, and with re-tweets, OEM storm messages reached an estimated audience of

121,871 people. Social media messaging also played an important role in response and recovery following a major ice storm in April. Follow the South Dakota Office of Emergency Management for preparedness tips and real-time information on winter weather as it approaches and impacts our state and its citizens.



WINTER TRAVEL

Winter driving can be extremely hazardous at times due to poor road conditions or reduced visibilities from heavy or blowing snow. During these times, travel is difficult and not recommended. Many people still venture outdoors not knowing what they will encounter. Many winter deaths and injuries can be attributed to people becoming stranded and venturing away from their vehicle. To avoid this, you should stay inside your vehicle and wait for help.

When traveling this winter season:

- Listen to the forecast before departing and postpone travel if inclement weather is occurring or expected.
- Avoid traveling alone. Inform others of your timetable and planned routes.
- Keep your gas tank near full.
- Adjust your speed to the condition and increase following distances.
- Carry a Winter Survival Kit in your vehicle at all times!

Items that should be in your Survival Kit:

- Shovel and flashlight with extra batteries
- First aid kit and medications
- Non-perishable food, such as granola bars and peanuts
- Candles and matches
- Extra clothing, sleeping bags, or blankets
- Jumper cables and tire chains
- Battery-operated radio



- Cell phone with fully charged batteries
- Windshield scraper and brush
- Brightly colored cloth to tie on the antenna so the vehicle can be easily located



bReadySD encourages South Dakotans to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses,

towns and cities. It strengthens individuals to have an emergency bReady kit, make a family emergency plan and learn more about different threats like

natural disasters and epidemics that may happen. Learn more at www.bReadySD.com.

STRANDED DURING A WINTER STORM

If you are stranded in your vehicle during a winter storm:

- Stay with your vehicle.
- Use your cell phone to call 911. Be aware of your location and situation.
- Move all your emergency supplies from the vehicle's trunk to the interior of the car as soon as you realize you may be staying for a while.
- Check your supplies to see what you have available and arrange them in order for their use. This will help you ration them in case you are stranded for a long period of time.
- Run the engine sparingly. Start with 15 minutes every hour and adjust if needed. While running the engine, keep a downwind window cracked to prevent carbon monoxide buildup.
- Keep the exhaust pipe clear of snow.
- If the cold is extreme, it may be necessary to keep the engine running continuously. It may not restart if shut off.
- Never go to sleep with the engine running.
- Turn on the dome light at night while the engine is running. It may help others to locate you. Turn it off when you turn off the engine so you don't run down the car's battery.
- Put on warm clothing right away, before you start to get cold. It is easier to stay warm than it is to regain lost warmth. Loosen tight clothing so body heat can circulate. Remove metal jewelry, as it can chill you.
- Keep your feet off the floor if the heater is not on.
- Use newspapers, maps, or even the removable car mats for added insulation.
- Do mild exercises to help you stay warm.
- Watch for signs of frostbite or hypothermia.
- Eat a snack of high calorie food just before sleeping to stimulate your metabolism (heat production). If you awaken due to the cold, eat some more high energy food and add another layer of insulation such as more clothing or a blanket.
- Tie a colorful banner on the car antenna. If you need to leave the car for any distance during the storm, tie a nylon rope to the car and yourself so you will be able to find your way back to the car.

WIND CHILL DANGERS

Winter temperatures can be deceiving. Thermometers measure only the cold. Don't forget that the effects on your body are compounded by the wind. The combined effect of winter cold and wind speed is called wind chill. As the wind increases, heat is carried away from the body at an accelerated rate, driving down the body temperature.

Frostbite is the damage to body tissues caused by extreme cold. A wind chill of -20°F will cause frostbite in just 30 minutes. Frostbite causes a loss of feeling and a white or pale appearance in extremities, such as fingers, toes, ear lobes or the tip of the nose. If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately! If you must wait for help, slowly rewarm affected areas. However, if the person is also showing signs of

hypothermia, warm the body core before the extremities.

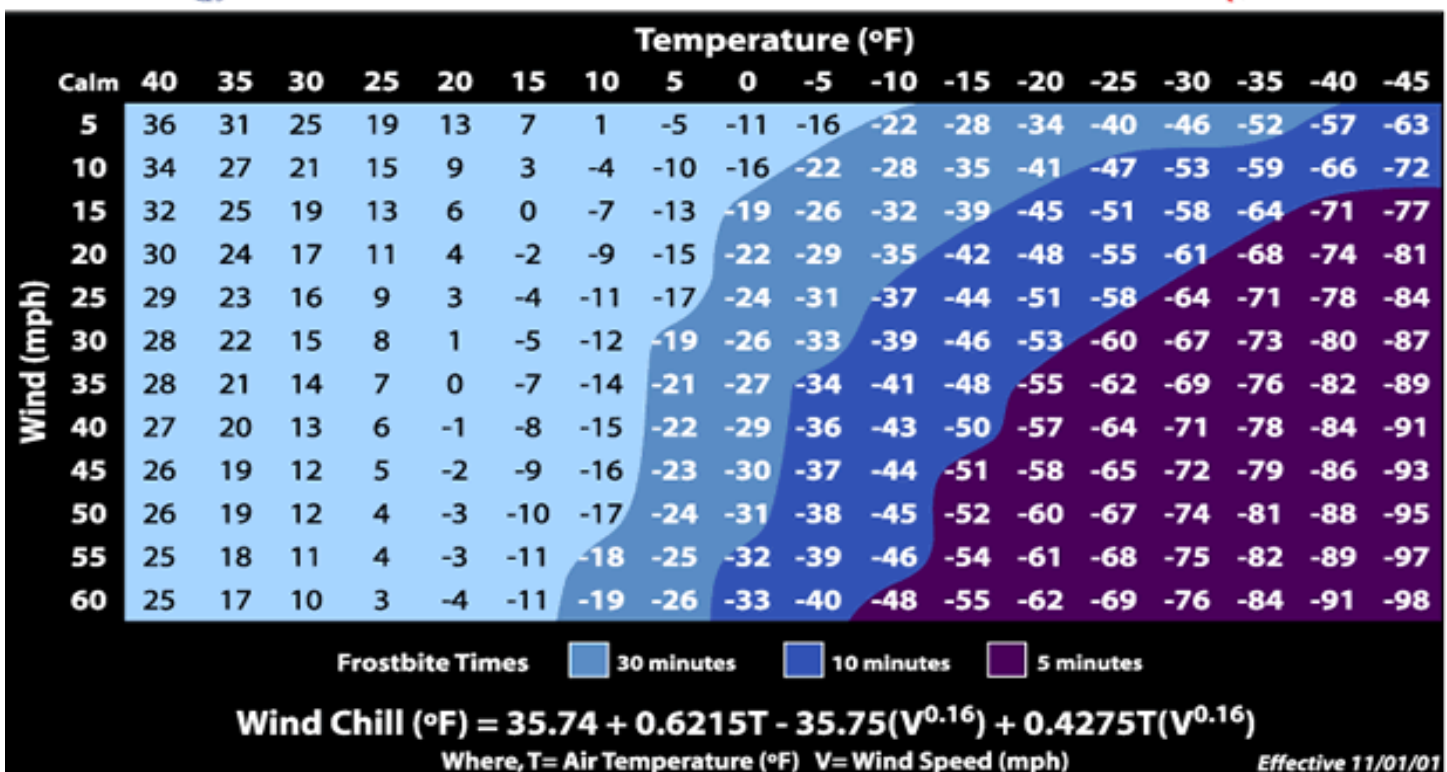
Hypothermia is a condition brought on when the body temperature drops to less than 95°F. It can kill. For those who survive, there are likely to be lasting kidney, liver, and pancreas problems. Warning signs include uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness and apparent exhaustion. Take the person's temperature. If below 95°F, seek medical care immediately!

What if medical care is not available? If a person has symptoms of hypothermia warm them slowly, starting with the body core. Warming the arms and the legs first drives cold blood toward the heart and can lead to heart failure. If

necessary, use your body heat to help. Get the person into dry clothing and wrap in a warm blanket covering head and neck. Do not give the person alcohol, drugs, coffee, or any hot beverage or food. Warm broth is the first food to offer.



NWS Windchill Chart



WINTER FIRE SAFETY

Winter holidays can be a joyous time for all, but nearly 50% of civilian fire deaths occur throughout the winter season: November-February. Most heating fires in South Dakota involve fireplaces and chimneys. The most dangerous place to be, with regard to fire, is in your own home. Your home can be a cozy, warm place away from a harsh winter, but it can also become dangerous if you don't take special precautions.

Tips to Eliminate Winter Fires

- Safety around heating equipment and appliances is an important first step in reducing the threat of fire. Keep children and loose clothing at a safe distance.
- Use a yardstick to measure the distance between heating equipment and combustible material. Unless you have three feet of clearance, you are at risk.
- Always turn off portable heating appliances when leaving home or retiring for the evening. Be sure the fire in the fireplace is out before going to bed.
- Have chimneys, fireplaces, and other heating devices inspected by a qualified professional at the start of every heating season.
- Use a sturdy screen or glass closure in front of your fireplace, and burn only clean fireplace wood. Never burn treated lumber.

- Install smoke detectors on every level of your home, including the basement, and test them monthly.
- If you smell gas in your home, contact your local utility company or qualified professional heating contractor and follow their advice.
- Inspect heat tape before using it. Never thaw frozen pipes with an open flame.

Winter Safety Tips

- Protect neighborhood homes this winter. Keep your nearest fire hydrant clear of snow.



- After holiday parties, check wastebaskets and furniture for smoldering cigarettes.
- Place holiday decorations well away from heat sources. If you have a tree, water it daily.
- Do not burn holiday wrappings in a fireplace; it may cause a chimney fire.

- Pay attention when cooking. If a pan is on fire, cover it with a lid. Water will spread the fire.
- Turn off and unplug lights and decorations before going to bed or leaving your house. Buy electrical decorations that have been approved by a national testing laboratory. Don't overload outlets.

Candle Burning Safety Tips

- Place candles on a secure surface in sturdy noncombustible holders that won't tip over. Make sure the holder is large enough to catch drippings.
- Keep candles away from children and pets. Candles should be out of children's reach.
- Keep candles away from combustible items such as curtains, books, and paper. Remember the "three-foot rule" - anything combustible needs to be kept three feet from a heat source.
- Keep candles away from flammable liquids. Do not use a candle for light when fueling a kerosene heater or lantern. The flame may ignite the fumes.
- Avoid using candles during a power outage. A flashlight is a safer option. Don't carry a lit candle.
- Remember to extinguish candles when leaving the room or going to sleep. Never leave children or pets unattended in a room with a lit candle.

Family Communications Plan

Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another and then review your plan for different situations.



Out-of-town contact: Ask an out-of-town friend to be your family contact. After a disaster, it's often easier to call long distance. This person may be in a better location to communicate among separated family members.

Out-of-Town Contact Name: _____ Telephone Number: _____
E-mail: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Keep an updated record for each family member:

Name: _____	Social Security Number: _____
Date of Birth: _____	Important Medical Information: _____
Name: _____	Social Security Number: _____
Date of Birth: _____	Important Medical Information: _____
Name: _____	Social Security Number: _____
Date of Birth: _____	Important Medical Information: _____
Name: _____	Social Security Number: _____
Date of Birth: _____	Important Medical Information: _____
Name: _____	Social Security Number: _____
Date of Birth: _____	Important Medical Information: _____
Name: _____	Social Security Number: _____
Date of Birth: _____	Important Medical Information: _____

Where to go in an emergency. Write down site-specific information for the places family members spend time:

Home:	Work:
Address: _____	Address: _____
Phone Number: _____	Phone Number: _____
Neighborhood Meeting Place: _____	Evacuation Location: _____
Regional Meeting Place: _____	

School:	Work:
Address: _____	Address: _____
Phone Number: _____	Phone Number: _____
Evacuation Location: _____	Evacuation Location: _____

School:	Additional location:
Address: _____	Address: _____
Phone Number: _____	Phone Number: _____
Evacuation Location: _____	Evacuation Location: _____

School:	Additional location:
Address: _____	Address: _____
Phone Number: _____	Phone Number: _____
Evacuation Location: _____	Evacuation Location: _____

Important Contacts	Name	Telephone Number	Policy Number
Doctor(s):			
Pharmacist:			
Medical Insurance:			
Homeowners/Rental Insurance:			
Veterinarian/Kennel (for pets):			
Other:			

PROTECTING YOUR PETS

Winter can be a particularly difficult time for pets. Give your pet a safer, healthier weather season by following these tips:

- A temperature of 10°F or below is too cold for any pet to tolerate. The physical stress of cold temperatures can make pets more susceptible to illness or infection.
- Provide outdoor dogs or cats with a dry, insulated pet house or shelter out of the wind. Staying warm demands extra calories, so increase your pet's food intake, particularly protein.
- Remove ice, salt, and caked on mud from your pet's paws and coat right away. Contact your veterinarian immediately if you suspect your pet has frostbite. Frostbitten skin may turn reddish, white, or gray, and it may be scaly or sloughing.
- Cats and kittens often nap on car engines. Knock on the hood or honk the horn then wait a few minutes before starting the car.
- Pets like the smell and taste of antifreeze, but even a small amount can kill them. Thoroughly clean up spills at once. Tightly close containers and store them where pets cannot get to them.
- Never let your dog off its leash in the snow or ice. Dogs can lose their scent in snow and ice and become lost in the harsh weather. Make sure pets, such as dogs, always wear their ID tag.
- Don't use metal water dishes outside; your pet's tongue could stick to the frozen metal.
- Many plants, including holly, mistletoe, and poinsettia, are toxic to pets. Keep them out of your pet's reach.
- Always have fresh, clean water available.
- Dogs confined to the house because of winter weather may lack proper exercise and suffer depression. Help by giving more attention and encouraging them to be active.



WINTER SAFETY FOR SCHOOLS

Children can be especially susceptible to the dangers associated with winter weather. Their youthful enthusiasm often takes over when common sense and safety should prevail. Even if they are cold, wet, or exhausted, they often are not conscious of the potential impact these conditions pose.

School administrators and principals need to be sensitive to the dangers winter weather can pose to children and be prepared. Winter weather procedures and practices need to be established before the onset of the winter season. When formulating a winter weather safety plan consider the following:

- The best source for the latest information is a NOAA weather radio. Most counties fall within their coverage area. Commercial radio or television should also be monitored. Contact the county sheriff's office to ask if they will relay critical weather forecasts to the school.
- All schools need to have a functional plan in regard to closures due to snow, ice, or extreme cold.
- During the winter months, guidelines need to be established regarding outside recess periods. Temperatures and wind chills need to be monitored and criteria set as to when outside recess will be allowed.
- School bus drivers should receive extra training on driving during winter weather. Snow and ice can often accumulate quickly and unexpectedly on roads creating dangerous driving conditions.



- With many households having two working parents today, it may be necessary for some children to be brought to school early. Schools should make provisions to allow children inside school buildings as early as possible during cold weather.

CARING FOR THE ELDERLY

As your body becomes older it becomes less able to respond to long exposure to cold winters. In cold weather, some older people may develop accidental hypothermia, a drop in internal body temperature that can be fatal if not detected and treated properly.

Accidental Hypothermia

Hypothermia is a condition of below normal body temperature - typically 95°F or under. Accidental hypothermia may occur in anyone who is exposed to severe cold without enough protection. However, some older people develop accidental hypothermia after exposure to relatively mild cold.

Those elderly most likely to develop accidental hypothermia are: the chronically ill, the poor who are unable to afford enough heating fuel, and those who do not take the normal steps to keep warm. The small number of aged persons whose body temperature regulation is defective face the greatest danger. For unknown reasons, these people do not feel cold or shiver, and thus cannot produce body heat when they need it. It is interesting to note that many people who have "felt cold" for years may actually have a lower risk of accidental hypothermia.

The only sure way to detect hypothermia is to use a special low-reading thermometer, available in most hospitals. A regular thermometer will also do as long as

you shake it down well. If your temperature is below 95°F or does not register, get emergency medical help. Other signs to look for include: an unusual change in appearance or behavior during cold weather, slow, and sometimes irregular heart-beat, slurred speech, shallow, very slow breathing, sluggishness, and confusion. Treatments consist of re-warming the person under a doctor's supervision, preferably in a hospital.



Protective Measures

There is no strong scientific basis for recommending room temperatures for older people. However, setting the heat at 65°F in living and sleeping areas should be adequate in most cases, although sick people may need more heat.

Measures you can take to prevent accidental hypothermia include:

- Dress warmly even when indoors, eat enough food, and stay as active as possible.
- Because hypothermia may start during sleep, keep warm in bed by wearing enough clothing and using blankets.
- If you take medicine to treat anxiety, depression, nervousness, or nausea, ask your doctor whether the medication might affect the control of body temperature.
- Ask friends or neighbors to look in on you once or twice a day, particularly during a cold spell. See if your community has a telephone check-in or personal visit service for the elderly or home-bound.

Contact for Assistance

Anyone trying to save on fuel costs can protect against hypothermia by dressing warmly and heating only one or two rooms of the home.

There are government-funded programs to help low-income families pay high energy bills, weatherize (insulate) their homes, or even get emergency repairs of heating/cooling units. Your local community actions agency or area agency on aging should be able to direct you to the proper source of assistance.

When there is snow outside, bundle up in lots of layers of clothing and wear a hat. Ask an adult if it's okay to play outside — and come inside often for "warm-up" breaks.



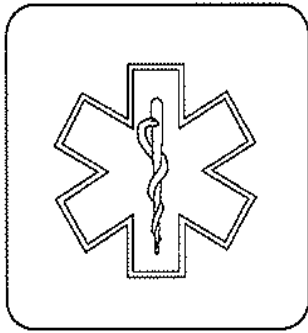
Emergency Phone Numbers

My Family Name: _____

My Phone Number: _____

My Address: _____

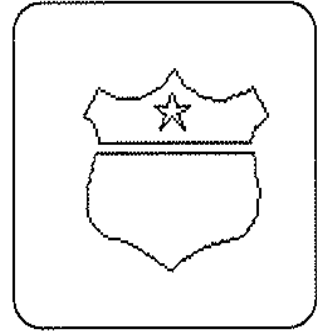
My Town: _____



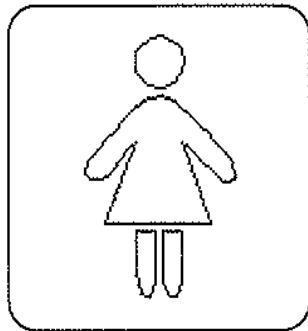
Ambulance



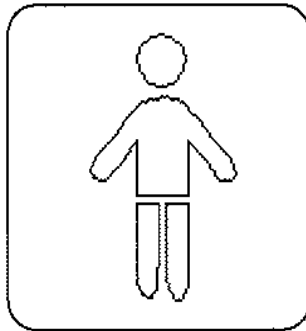
Fire



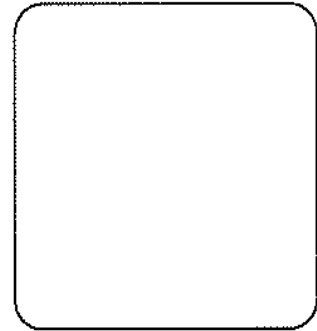
Police/Sheriff



Mother



Father



Other

COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGERS' CONTACT NUMBERS

Aurora 605.942.7751	Grant 605.432.4637	
Beadle 605.353.8421	Gregory 605.775.2626	
Bennett 605.685.5994	Haakon 605.567.3515	
Bon Homme 605.589.4242	Hamlin 605.783.7831	
Brookings 605.696.8350	Hand 605.853.2408	
Brown 605.626.7122	Hanson 605.239.4218	
Brule 605.234.3433	Harding 605.375.3313	
Buffalo 605.293.3231	Hughes 605.773.7454	
Butte 605.723.0900	Hutchinson 605.770.7927	
Campbell 605.955.3598	Hyde 605.852.2595	
Charles Mix 605.384.5350	Jackson 605.488.0334	
Clark 605.532.3822	Jerauld 605.539.0243	
Clay 605.677.7185	Jones 605.669.7101	
Codington 605.882.6272	Kingsbury 605.854.3711	
Corson 605.273.4481	Lake 605.256.7611	
Custer 605.673.8152	Lawrence 605.578.2122	
Davison 605.995.8640	Lincoln 605.764.5746	
Day 605.345.3222	Lyman 605.869.2266	
Deuel 605.874.8189	Marshall 605.448.2339	
Dewey 605.848.1094	McCook 605.421.1302	
Douglas 605.999.5682	McPherson 605.439.3667	
Edmunds 605.287.4394	Meade 605.347.7623	
Fall River 605.745.7562	Mellette 605.259.3371	
Faulk 605.598.6229	Miner 605.772.4533	
		Minnehaha 605.367.4290
		Moody 605.997.3251
		Pennington 605.394.2185
		Perkins 605.244.5243
		Potter 605.765.9405
		Roberts 605.698.3800
		Sanborn 605.796.4511
		Shannon 605.745.7562
		Spink 605.472.4591
		Stanley 605.773.7454
		Sully 605.258.2244
		Todd 605.429.3246
		Tripp 605.842.1890
		Turner 605.297.6000
		Union 605.356.2351
		Walworth 605.845.2800
		Yankton 605.668.5289
		Ziebach 605.365.5129



TRIBAL EMERGENCY MANAGERS' CONTACT NUMBERS

Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe 605.964.4155	Oglala Sioux Tribe 605.867.8479	Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate 605.742.0431
Crow Creek Sioux Tribe 605.245.2779	Rosebud Sioux Tribe 605.747.2559	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe 701.854.8644
Lower Brule Sioux Tribe 605.473.5532	Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe ... 605.997.2642x1112	Yankton Sioux Tribe 605.384.5003



INTERNET RESOURCES



<http://www.redcross.org>

The American Red Cross has many materials available for teachers, educators, and presenters to use to help children and families learn how to stay safe and prevent or reduce the effects of disasters or other emergencies.

<http://www.fema.gov/plan/index.shtml>

While most disasters cannot be avoided, the Federal Emergency Management Agency provides information on things people can do to lessen the loss of life and property damage.

<http://disasterassistance.gov>

DisasterAssistance provides responders, emergency managers and homeland security advisors an online capability to collaborate with other members of the

disaster management community. It is also a source of general information for citizens.

<http://www.sddot.com/travelers/>

This page includes links to assist South Dakota travelers.

<http://www.ready.gov/>

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has developed a website to assist citizens in learning about potential threats so that they are better prepared.

<http://www.ed.gov/emergencyplan/>

This website is designed to be a one-stop shop that provides school leaders with information they need to plan for any emergency, including natural disasters, violent incidents, and terrorist acts.

<http://www.dhs.gov/how-do-i/prepare-my-family-disaster>

Educating America's families on how best to prepare their homes for a disaster and tips for citizens on how to respond in a crisis is a mission of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov>

The National Weather Service (NWS) provides weather, forecasts, and warnings for the entire United States.

<http://www.weather.gov/os/edures.shtml>

This page contains links to the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration web sites that contain information about weather education.

SEASONAL FLU PREVENTION

Flu is a serious contagious disease. Each year in the United States, on average, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized and 36,000 people die from seasonal flu complications.

Flu-like symptoms include:

- Fever (usually high)
- Headache
- Extreme tiredness
- Dry cough
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle aches
- Sore throat
- Vomiting
- Sometimes diarrhea

What you Can Do to Stay Healthy

Stay Informed.

Influenza is thought to **spread mainly person-to-person** through coughing or sneezing of infected people.

Take everyday actions to stay healthy.

Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.

Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.

Stay home if you get sick. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds, and other social distancing measures.

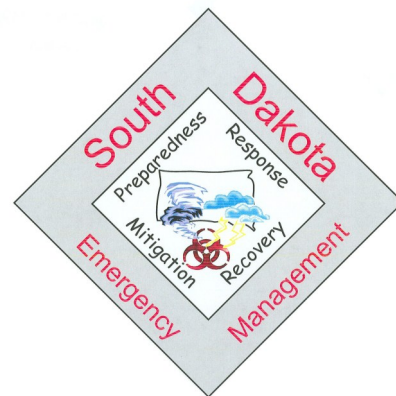
Find healthy ways to deal with stress and anxiety.

Vaccination is especially important for people at high risk of serious flu complications, including young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes, heart and lung disease, and people 65 years and older.

South Dakota Office of Emergency Management

SD Department of Public Safety
118 West Capital Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501
Phone: 605.773.3231
Fax: 605.773.3580

The information contained in this newsletter was compiled by various agencies concerned with the safety of South Dakota citizens. The South Dakota Department of Health, the South Dakota Department of Transportation, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the National Weather Service helped make the 2013 South Dakota Winter Weather Preparedness Guide possible.



WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.OEM.SD.GOV



[SDEmergencyMgmt](https://www.facebook.com/SDEmergencyMgmt)



[@SDEmergencyMgmt](https://twitter.com/SDEmergencyMgmt)

WINTER WEATHER TERMS

The winter wonderland that makes South Dakota so beautiful during the snowy months can also be life threatening. Winter blizzards, heavy snows, ice storms, freezing rain and high winds can be a serious hazard. One of the best defenses is to stay informed. By understanding and observing storm warnings, adequate preparations can be made to lessen the impact of hazardous weather on ourselves, our property, and pets. To take full advantage of weather forecasts, know the specific meaning of the terms commonly used:

- **Freezing Rain** - creates a coating of ice on roads and walkways.
- **Sleet** - is rain that turns to ice pellets before reaching the ground. Sleet also causes roads to freeze and become slippery.
- **Winter Weather Advisory** - means cold, ice, and snow are expected.

- **Winter Storm Watch** - means severe weather such as heavy snow or ice is possible in the next day or two.
- **Blizzard Warning** - means heavy snow and strong winds will produce a blinding snow, near zero visibility, deep drifts, and life-threatening wind chill.
- **Frost/Freeze Warning** - means below freezing temperatures are expected.
- **Winter Storm Warning** - means severe winter conditions have begun or will begin very soon.

When a winter storm warning is issued:

- Stay indoors.
- If you must go outside wear several layers of lightweight clothing, those layers will keep you warmer than a single heavy coat.



See road conditions at www.SafeTravelUSA.com, by calling 511, through radio announcements, media releases, and dynamic message signs and OEM Facebook and Twitter.

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