

Overall safety

- Dress warmly in layers when going outside during cold weather.
- When walking on ice and snow, wear rubber-soled shoes or boots to get better traction and take slower, shorter steps. Use handrails when they are available. Use a melting solution or rock salt to clear all walkways of any ice and snow if possible.
- Maintain a home survival kit that includes a battery operated radio, flashlights, extra batteries, bottled water, canned food, a manual can opener, blankets and a first aid kit.
- Safety at home
- Install working smoke alarms in a central location outside each sleeping area. Test alarms monthly, and install new batteries annually.
- Hire a professional to inspect all heat sources, such as fireplaces, furnaces and water heaters. Keep all combustible material at least 3 feet away from heat sources.
- After snowfall, make sure dryer, furnace, stove and fireplace vents are cleared of snow buildup.
- Clean chimneys annually. Use a metal grate to hold logs inside fireplaces, and use a screen to prevent embers from flying outside the firebox. Remember to open the damper before lighting a fire.
- Never use ovens or barbecue grills to heat the home.

Safety on the road

Car care requires extra attention during cold weather.

- Gas tanks should be at least half full of fuel. When filling up, discharge static electricity by touching the fuel pump to prevent igniting gasoline fumes. Do not use a cell phone or re-enter the vehicle once fueling has started.
- Always pull a vehicle out of the garage immediately after starting it. Don't warm up a car in the garage, even if the garage door is open. Make sure the exhaust pipe of a running vehicle isn't covered in snow.
- When driving, allow extra travel time when roads are hazardous. Vehicles should be winterized by a qualified mechanic, and tires should be checked for tread quality. If possible, avoid driving while streets are covered in ice and snow.
- Officials recommend vehicles be equipped with survival kits. Necessary items include blankets, bottled water, flashlight and extra batteries, first aid kit, jumper cables and snow chains if applicable.

Carbon monoxide safety

- Carbon monoxide poisoning is especially dangerous during cold months. Carbon monoxide alarms should be installed in a central location outside sleeping areas. Test the detector monthly.
- Carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels like natural gas burn incompletely. In the home, heating and cooking equipment that burn fuel are potential sources of carbon monoxide. Vehicles or generators running in an attached garage can also produce dangerous levels of carbon monoxide.
- Carbon monoxide poisoning causes about 250 unintentional injuries and deaths each year, according to the [National Safety Council](#). The gas is even more dangerous for infants, pregnant women and people with health problems. Symptoms include shortness of breath, nausea, dizziness and headache.