

Governor Ted Strickland



American Red Cross
Emergency Management Association of Ohio
National Weather Service
Ohio Citizen Corps
Ohio Department of Aging
Ohio Department of Commerce-State Fire Marshal
Ohio Department of Education

Ohio Department of Health
Ohio Department of Insurance
Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Ohio Department of Public Safety-Ohio EMA
Ohio Department of Transportation
Ohio Insurance Institute
Ohio News Network

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Don't Let Warm Weather Fool You – Winter Is On Its Way
Winter Safety Awareness Week is November 14-20

Columbus, OH – Although Ohio endured tornadoes and strong winds in September and October, and temperatures near 70 degrees in the second week of November, winter is only one month away. The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness (OCSWA) is encouraging all Ohioans to use the remaining good weather to prepare their homes for the upcoming cold months.

In a coordinated effort with OCSWA, Governor Ted Strickland has proclaimed the week of November 14-20 as Ohio's Winter Safety Awareness Week to help encourage households, schools, businesses and organizations to plan and prepare for severe winter weather.

“Even though we've been enjoying warm weather, winter is just around the corner and we want all Ohioans to be safe and prepared for this winter season,” said Ohio Department of Public Safety Director Thomas J. Stickrath. “Everyone should take steps now to be sure they aren't left in the cold if we are hit by severe snow and ice.”

To help prepare for the upcoming winter months, OCSWA recommends the following:

Prepare your home for winter. Cut and remove low-hanging and dead tree branches. Ice, snow and strong winds can cause tree limbs to break and fall. Have your gutters cleaned. Snow and ice can build up quickly if gutters are clogged with debris. Have auxiliary heaters, furnaces and fireplaces maintenance checked or serviced before using. If using a portable generator, read instructions thoroughly to guard against carbon monoxide poisoning. Ensure smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working properly. Review your homeowner's insurance policy; invest in flood insurance.

Prepare winter disaster kits for the home and vehicle. Refresh your nonperishable foods and bottled water stored in your disaster kits. Change the batteries in your smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and radios. Winter emergency kits should include warm clothing, blankets, flashlights, new batteries, coats, hats, gloves, a battery-operated or hand-cranked radio, first aid kit, and enough nonperishable food and water (one gallon per person, per day) to sustain each family member for at least three days. Have stored food and bottled water and supplies for your pets, as well. Ensure that vehicles have annual tune ups and maintenance checks and try to maintain a least a half tank of fuel in vehicles to reduce the chance of fuel-line freeze up.

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“Teaching Ohioans Severe Weather Safety and Preparedness”

www.weathersafety.ohio.gov

Invest in a NOAA Public Alert/Weather Radio. Every home, school and business should have a tone-alert weather radio with a battery back-up. Weather and public alert radios are programmed to automatically sound an alert during public safety and severe weather events. Click on www.weather.gov/nwr/ for additional information.

Update your disaster preparedness plans. Every home, school, business and organization should have written plans for the different types of disasters that can occur. Review the plans with the entire family or staff. Everyone should know what to do in the event of a snow or ice storm, a prolonged power outage, a flood or fire. Post contact information for your local emergency management agency. Prepare and practice drills that require sheltering in place and evacuation. Update your emergency contact list and establish a meeting place outside of the home, school or business, where others will know where to find or meet you.

The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness is an advocate for family emergency preparedness and is comprised of representatives from American Red Cross; Emergency Management Association of Ohio; National Weather Service; Ohio Citizen Corps/Hands On, Central Ohio; Ohio Department of Public Safety-Emergency Management Agency; Ohio Insurance Institute; Ohio News Network; Ohio Department of Commerce – State Fire Marshal; and the Ohio Departments of Aging, Education, Health, Insurance, Natural Resources, and Transportation.

For additional information on winter weather safety and severe weather preparedness, visit OCSWA's site at www.weathersafety.ohio.gov.

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