



Governor John R. Kasich

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Emergency Management Association of Ohio	Ohio Dept. of Mental Health & Addiction Services
National Weather Service	Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Ohio Citizen Corps	Ohio Department of Public Safety - Ohio EMA
Ohio Department of Aging	Ohio Department of Transportation
Ohio Department of Commerce-State Fire Marshal	Ohio Insurance Institute
Ohio Department of Education	WBNS – 10TV
Ohio Department of Health	WCMH – NBC4

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WARM ONE DAY, COLD THE NEXT. GET READY. WINTER’S COMING, REGARDLESS
Winter Safety Awareness Week is November 16-22, 2014

Columbus, OH – The Buckeye State should be used to “yo-yo weather.” It started this week with sunny skies and warm, fall temperatures in the 50s and 60s, and will end the week with a cold mass of arctic air moving in, with temps down to the 20s and 30s, and chances of snow. Winter is on its way.

To help Ohioans prepare for the wintery months ahead, Gov. John R. Kasich and the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness (OCSWA) are promoting Winter Safety Awareness Week, November 16-22. During this week, Gov. Kasich encourages household and businesses to update their safety plans, replenish their disaster supply kit, and prepare themselves and their property for winter-related incidents.

“When you’re snowed in and the power is out, *that* is not the ideal time to organize a disaster supply kit,” said Nancy Dragani, Executive Director of the Ohio Emergency Management Agency. “Winter Safety Week is a good time to update your kits – check the expiration dates of your nonperishable food; stock up on bottled water; renew first aid kits and medications; check the batteries in flashlights, radios and smoke detectors; and gather blankets and warm clothing.”

Winter Safety Awareness Week is also a good time to ensure your vehicles are ready for the extreme cold. Is your car or truck due for a tune up? Have the battery, belts, wiper blades and tires checked.

Also, know before you go. Pay attention to weather forecasts and traffic reports. Listen for reports of school and business closings, snow emergencies, traffic delays or road closures. Plan your drive time accordingly.

To help prepare for winter, 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. Review your homeowner’s insurance policy; consider your need for flood insurance.

Prepare winter disaster kits for the home and vehicle. Refresh stored nonperishable foods and bottled water. 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 every family member for several days. Have stored food, bottled water and supplies for your pets, as well.

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.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/ for additional information.

Update your disaster preparedness plans. Every home, school, and business 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.

OCSWA is an advocate for emergency preparedness and is comprised of representatives from the following: American Red Cross; Emergency Management Association of Ohio; National Weather Service; Ohio Citizen Corps; Ohio Department of Public Safety – Emergency Management Agency; Ohio Insurance Institute; Ohio Department of Commerce – State Fire Marshal; Ohio Departments of Aging, Education, Health, Insurance, Mental Health & Addiction Services, Natural Resources, and Transportation; NBC4 (WCMH) and WBNS-10TV.

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

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