Hazard Help Sheet

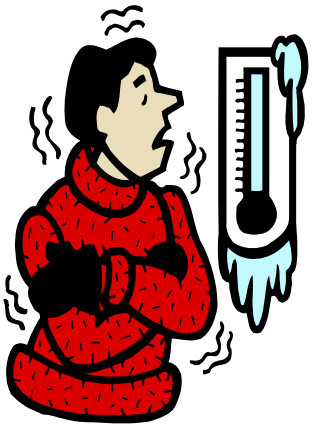
Extreme Cold

Think Safety First!

Winter in Akwesasne this year is extremely cold! Exposure to extreme cold can cause frostbite or hypothermia and become life-threatening. Infants and elderly people are most susceptible. What constitutes extreme cold varies in different parts of the continent. In the South, near freezing temperatures are considered extreme cold. Freezing temperatures can cause severe damage to citrus fruit crops and other vegetation. Pipes may freeze and burst in homes that are poorly insulated or without heat. In the North, extreme cold means temperatures well below zero.

Wind Chill is not the actual temperature but rather how wind and cold feel on exposed skin. As the wind increases, heat is carried away from the body at an accelerated rate, driving down the body temperature. Animals are also affected by wind chill, so please consider bringing your pets inside during these cold temperatures.

Frostbite is damage to body tissue caused by extreme cold. A wind chill of -20° Fahrenheit (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!

If medical care is NOT immediately available, warm the person slowly, starting with the body core. Warming the arms and 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 the 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.

Winter Clothing Tips

* Wear layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing. Trapped air between the layers will insulate you.
* Outer garments should be tightly woven, water repellent, and hooded.
* Wear a hat, because 40% of your body heat can be lost from your head.
* Cover your mouth to protect your lungs from extreme cold.
* Mittens, snug at the wrist, are better than gloves.
* Try to stay dry and out of the wind.

Please don't forget about your PETS!



Brrrrrrrrrrought to you by MCA's Emergency Measures!

Hazard Help Sheet
Winter Weather Checklists

Winter Weather Checklists are extremely important to have during these weather conditions. So, please stock up your emergency supplies for communication, food, safety and vehicles in case severe weather arrives and any storm hits. Below are those list.

COMMUNICATIONS

Make sure you have one of the following in case there is a power failure:

* Cell phone, portable charger and extra batteries.
* Landline phone (a phone with a cord connected to the wall).
* Battery powered radio for listening to local radio **CKON 97.3 FM**;.
* Make an Family Emergency Plan. Know where everyone is when and if you are separated.
* Check on your neighbors, especially the elderly and assist as necessary.

WINTER STORM WARNINGS

Winter Weather Advisory: expect winter weather conditions (i.e. accumulation of snow, freezing rain, sleet, etc.) that could cause severe inconvenience and life-threatening hazards.

Frost / Freeze Warning: Expect below freezing temperatures.

Winter Storm Watch: Be alert; a storm is likely.

Winter Storm Warning: Take action; the storm is in or entering the area.

Blizzard Warning: Seek refuge immediately. Snow and strong winds, near zero visibility, deep snow drifts and life-threatening wind chill.





WATER CHEKLIST

Keep a water supply. Extreme cold can cause water pipes in your home to freeze and sometimes break.

* Leave all water taps slightly open so they drip continuously.
* Keep the indoor temperature warm.
* Allow more heated air near pipes. Open kitchen cabinet doors under the kitchen sink.
* If your pipes do freeze, do not thaw them with a torch. Thaw the pipes slowly with warm air from an electric hair dryer.
* If you cannot thaw your pipes, or if the pipes have broken open, use bottled water or get water from a neighbor's home.
* Fill the bathtub or have bottled water on hand.
* In an emergency, if no other water is available, snow can be melted for water. Bringing water to a rolling boil for one minute will kill most germs but won't get rid of chemicals sometimes found in snow.

COOKING & LIGHTING



* Use battery powered flashlights and lanterns.
* Avoid using candles as these can lead to house fires. Never leave candles unattended.
* Never use charcoal or portable gas grills indoors. The fumes are deadly.

Hazard Help Sheet
Winter Weather Checklists

HEATING CHECKLIST

Turning on the stove for heat is not safe. Have **at least one** of the following heat sources in case the power goes out.

* Extra blankets, sleeping bags, and warm winter coats.
* Fireplace with plenty of dry seasoned firewood or a gas log fireplace.
* Portable space heaters or kerosene heaters. Use electric space heaters with automatic shut-off switches and non-glowing elements.
* Never place a space heater on top of furniture or near water.
* Never leave children unattended near a space heater.
* Keep heat sources at least 3 feet away from furniture, drapes and other flammable items.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

* Chemical fire extinguisher.
* Smoke alarm should be n working order (Check prior to winter storm season and change batteries, if needed.)
* Carbon monoxide detector (Check prior to winter storm season and change batteries, if needed.)
* Never use an electric generator indoors, inside the garage, or near the air intake of your home because of the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
* Do not use the generator or appliances if they are wet.
* Do not store gasoline indoors where the fumes



CAR & EMERGENCY CHECKLIST

Minimize travel, but if travel is necessary, keep the following in your vehicle:

- Water
- Shovel
- Tool kit
- Blankets
- Flashlight
- Snack food
- First aid kit
- Tire chains
- Paper towels
- Chains / rope
- Booster cables
- Windshield scraper
- Waterproof matches
- Road maps & compass
- Emergency flares / flags
- Extra hats, coats, & mittens
- Cell phone & portable charger
- Battery powered radio (w/extra batteries)



FOOD & SAFETY CHECKLIST

Have a week's worth of food and safety supplies. If you live far from other people, have more supplies on hand. Make sure you have the following supplies:

* Drinking water
* Canned/no-cook food (bread, crackers, dried fruits)
* Non-electric can opener
* Baby food and formula (if baby in the household)
* Prescription drugs and other medicine
* First-aid kit
* Rock-salt to melt ice on walkways. Sand or kitty litter may be used as a substitute.



For more info go to www.bt.cdc.gov