

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Winter Weather Awareness Day in Missouri on Nov. 16 is a reminder to be prepared for snow, ice and cold

Blizzard and severe winter storm of Jan. 31 – Feb. 1, 2011 brought record or near-record snowfall to more than 50 Missouri counties and closed I-70 and significant portion of I-44

JEFFERSON CITY—Missouri has experienced a wide range of hazardous weather throughout 2011, and as cold temperatures return, the threat for severe winter storms is on the horizon. In preparation, the **National Weather Service**, the **Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services**, the **State Emergency Management Agency** and Missouri's local emergency managers are joining forces to promote Nov. 16 as Winter Weather Awareness Day in Missouri.

"The severe winter storm that began Jan. 31 and deposited up to two feet of snow in some areas of Missouri is a reminder of the importance of being preparing for heavy snowfall and ice and the problems they can create," said **State Emergency Management Agency Director Paul D. Parmenter**. "We got a fresh reminder late last month, when parts of the Northeast U.S. were hit by an early snow storm that cut off power for days. I encourage Missouri families to review their emergency supply kits with winter weather in mind."

Recommended preparations include creating a winter car kit for the trunk of your car, making sure fireplaces and generators function properly, exercising caution when shoveling snow or pushing a car out of snow banks and avoiding unnecessary travel when driving conditions are poor.

It is also important for people to keep up to date on weather forecasts and to understand key National Weather Service terms:

- **Winter Storm Watch** indicates that severe winter weather may affect your area within 12-48 hours.
- **Winter Storm Warning** indicates severe winter weather is in the area or expected immediately and can be life threatening.



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- **Ice Storm Warnings** are issued for ice accumulations of a quarter-inch or more.

Missourians can prepare for winter by:

- **Creating a family emergency plan** and creating an emergency kit with additional water and food that can be prepared without cooking in case of a power outage. Kits should include bottled water, canned and dry foods, battery-powered radio, flashlights, extra batteries, manual can opener and a first-aid kit.
- **Securing an alternate fuel source** such as firewood or a generator. Make sure your fireplace functions properly. If you have a generator, make sure you have fuel, your generator functions properly. Only operate the generator outdoors.
- **Creating a winter car kit** in the trunk of the car. This includes a blanket, spare radio with batteries, snacks or energy-type food, jumper cables, flares, shovel, sand or shingles to give tires traction.

Additional information about winter weather and preparedness tips can be found at the following Web sites:

National Weather Service - St. Louis Winter Weather Awareness Page:

www.crh.noaa.gov/lx/?n=winterday

SEMA: www.sema.dps.mo.gov (Look for “Winter Awareness Safety Tips” under More Information)

Missouri Ready in 3 Program’s Weather Preparedness Page:

<http://health.mo.gov/emergencies/readyin3/weather.php>

Missouri Dept. of Transportation’s Road Conditions: www.modot.mo.gov

FEMA’s Winter Awareness Campaign: www.fema.gov/areyouready/winter.shtm

National Weather Service - Winter Storms, *The Deceptive Killers* Brochure:

<http://www.weather.gov/os/brochures/winterstorm.pdf>

Missouri Ready in 3 Program also provides free family safety guides to help prepare your family and household: <http://health.mo.gov/emergencies/readyin3/pdf/familyguideenglish.pdf> , or call (573) 526-4768 to order a free family safety guide. The family safety guide is available in several languages.

You may also contact your local NWS office for interviews about Winter Weather Awareness Day or for additional information:

St. Louis: (636) 441-8467

Kansas City: (816) 540-6021

Springfield: (417) 869-4491

Paducah, Ky: (602) 744-6424