



# FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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## NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 6, 2014

### **CITIZENS REMINDED TO PREPARE FOR VERY COLD WEATHER**

**FREDERICK, MD** –The Frederick County Department of Emergency Preparedness reminds citizens to take steps and safety precautions now in preparation for what the National Weather Service (NWS) predicts will be “bitterly cold weather” tomorrow. A wind chill warning is in effect for Frederick County from 6:00 p.m. tonight through 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday.

Temperatures are expected to fall into the teens this evening, the lows from zero to five above overnight and then from 10 – 15 degrees above on Tuesday. But, wind gusts from 15 – 35 miles per hour will combine with the lower temperatures and could result in frostbite and lead to hypothermia if precautions are not taken, according to the NWS.

Here are some “[Winter Storms & Extreme Cold](#)” preparedness tips from [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) of the Federal Emergency Management agency:

- Watch for signs of frostbite. These include loss of feeling and white or pale appearance in extremities such as fingers, toes, ear lobes, and the tip of the nose. If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately.
- Watch for signs of hypothermia. These include uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness, and apparent exhaustion. If symptoms of hypothermia are detected, get the victim to a warm location, remove wet clothing, warm the center of the body first and give warm, non-alcoholic beverages if the victim is conscious. Get medical help as soon as possible.
- Drive only if it is absolutely necessary. If someone must drive: travel in the day; don’t travel alone; keep others informed of the schedule; stay on main roads, and avoid back road shortcuts.
- Let someone know the destination, the route, and the expected time of arrival. If the car gets stuck along the way, help can be sent along the predetermined route.

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- If someone has to work outside, take frequent breaks, dress in layers and keep extremities covered.
- If the pipes freeze, remove any insulation or layers of newspapers and wrap pipes in rags. Completely open all faucets and pour hot water over the pipes, starting where they were most exposed to the cold (or where the cold was most likely to penetrate).
- Maintain ventilation when using kerosene heaters to avoid build-up of toxic fumes. Refuel kerosene heaters outside and keep them at least three feet from flammable objects.
- Conserve fuel, if necessary, by keeping a residence cooler than normal. Temporarily close off heat to some rooms.
- If residents will be going away during cold weather, leave the heat on in the home and set to a temperature no lower than 55°F.

In addition, Frederick County emergency partners advise:

- Keep an eye on neighbors, particularly those who are elderly, who are caring for young children or living alone. Offer to assist with trips to the grocery, medical appointments or other errands.
- Park vehicles away from trees and power lines when possible.
- If a home loses power, close off unneeded rooms and have family members congregate in the warmest room with a supply of blankets to help conserve the heat in the house.
- DO NOT use candles for light. Candles are a leading cause of house fires. Instead, stock battery-operated lights, such as flashlights, and a good supply of batteries.
- Keep a battery-operated radio and batteries on hand to stay abreast of news and information. A corded telephone that is plugged directly into the jack can often operate without electricity. Keep cell phones fully recharged.
- Extreme cold can be very difficult for pets, just like their owners. Do not leave pets outdoors for a long time during cold weather. Pets can suffer hypothermia and serious illness, so do everything possible to keep them safe and warm.
- Register for emergency messages at [www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/ALERT](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/ALERT).

General information during the winter season will be available at [www.FrederickCountyMD.gov](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov), Frederick County Government TV, cable channel 19, social media sites and local television and radio news outlets. An up-to-date listing of road closures is available at [www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/roadsclosed](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/roadsclosed).

For additional preparedness tips, visit the Frederick County Government website [www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/READY](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/READY) or contact the Department of Emergency Preparedness at [EM@FrederickCountyMD.gov](mailto:EM@FrederickCountyMD.gov) or 301-600-1746.