



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY



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MEMA Encourages Residents to Prepare for Severe Winter Weather

FRAMINGHAM, MA – The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) wants to ensure that the residents of the Commonwealth are prepared for this winter's severe weather. In Massachusetts, a winter storm may range from a moderate snowfall over several hours to a Nor'easter with blizzard conditions that lasts for days. Severe winter weather may be accompanied by dangerously cold weather, strong winds, coastal flooding, and heavy snow. Residents of the Commonwealth must be prepared for prolonged power outages, difficult to impossible travel, and stores and businesses being closed. As we move into winter, MEMA encourages all residents to stay informed of changing weather conditions, build home and car emergency kits, have family and business emergency plans, and take some simple steps to mitigate the impacts of severe weather.

MEMA Director Kurt Schwartz stated, "Last year, residents of Massachusetts endured a long, hard winter with unprecedented snow and cold temperatures. While we hope that this winter will not be as challenging, it is best to 'prepare for the worst and hope for the best.' MEMA encourages residents to make preparations before the snow, ice, and cold temperatures hit Massachusetts. These precautions can help keep you and your family safe and protect your home."

Stay Informed – Monitor changing winter weather conditions and receive emergency alerts.

- Download the free Massachusetts Alerts app for your iOS or Android device for weather alerts from the National Weather Service and messages from MEMA. Visit www.mass.gov/mema/mobileapp
- Sign up for your community's emergency alerting system by contacting local public safety officials.
- Have a battery operated radio to monitor news and weather in case of a power outage.
- Follow MEMA on Twitter ([@MassEMA](https://twitter.com/MassEMA)) and like MEMA on Facebook (facebook.com/MassachusettsEMA) for storm updates and preparedness information.

Build an Emergency Kit – Have an emergency kit in your home and car in case you lose power, are isolated in your home, or become stranded in your vehicle during severe winter weather.

- For Your Home – Have enough food, water, batteries, medicine and other supplies in an emergency kit to last for at least 72 hours.
- For Your Vehicle – Store emergency supplies in your car's winter emergency kit in case your vehicle breaks down or you become stranded during cold weather.

Make an Emergency Plan – Make a plan with your family and household members for what to do and how to communicate in an emergency.

- Identify friends or family that you might stay with if you lose power during cold weather.
- If you receive medical treatments or home health care services, work with your medical provider to determine how to maintain care and service if you are unable to leave your home for a period of time during a winter storm.
- If you have transportation needs, work with local transportation providers and/or disability services (e.g., Paratransit, Independent Living Centers) to plan ahead for accessible transportation.
- Provide every family member with the name, address, and phone number of the family's emergency contact.

Steps to Mitigate the Impacts of Severe Weather – Prepare your home by removing dead or rotting trees and branches, check that smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working, insulate your home, and take other actions to prepare your home for winter weather. Additionally, winter storms can cause extended power outages which can be dangerous during extreme cold weather. Have alternate phone charging methods, learn how to use your emergency generator safely, plan for your unique medical needs and take other steps to prepare for power outages.

When driving in winter weather, keep your gas tank at least half full, ensure adequate tire tread and pressure, and check your antifreeze level, battery, defroster, windshield wipers, wiper fluid, and other vehicle equipment.

During the winter, MEMA will provide additional topical winter weather preparedness information to help residents prepare for severe winter weather. For additional information about Winter Storm & Extreme Cold Weather preparedness, go to www.mass.gov/mema.

MEMA is the state agency charged with ensuring the state is prepared to withstand, respond to, and recover from all types of emergencies and disasters, including natural hazards, accidents, deliberate attacks, and technological and infrastructure failures. MEMA's staff of professional planners, communications specialists and operations and support personnel is committed to an all hazards approach to emergency management. By building and sustaining effective partnerships with federal, state and local government agencies, and with the private sector - individuals, families, non-profits and businesses - MEMA ensures the Commonwealth's ability to rapidly recover from large and small disasters by assessing and mitigating threats and hazards, enhancing preparedness, ensuring effective response, and strengthening our capacity to rebuild and recover.

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