

# Winter Weather Preparedness Tips

<http://oem.amarillo.gov>

Heavy snowfall, ice storms, and extreme cold can immobilize an entire region. Even areas that normally experience mild winters can be hit with a major snowstorm or extreme cold. The impacts include flooding, closed highways, blocked roads, downed power lines, and hypothermia.

## BEFORE:

- Stock up on food, water, medicines, and heating fuel.
- Secure backup heat sources. Never use charcoal, gas, or propane heaters indoors.
- Install and check smoke detectors and CO detection.
- Weather-strip windows and doors to help seal out the cold. Wrap pipes with insulation tap to prevent freezing and bursting.
- A bag of non-clumping kitty litter is an extremely useful item in a winter storm disaster supply kit. It can be used on walkways to prevent slipping and it provides traction under wheels of vehicles stuck in ice and snow.
- Have a flash light in case power goes out. LED lamps, flashlights use the same batteries but last far longer for the same amount of light. Even solar-powered lights outdoors can be brought inside at night for lighting.
- Fill empty water jugs, leaving an inch of space at the top. Turn the refrigerator and freezer temps to their lowest settings and freeze as many jugs as possible. This will help keep items colder longer in the event of power outages.

## For Your Car:

- Keep a windshield scraper, shovel, small broom, blankets, and extra food in your car.
- Maintain a full tank of gas.
- Pay attention to updates on road conditions.



## DURING:

- Listen to the radio and TV for weather reports and closings.
- If you plan to be outside, dress in loose-fitting, layered clothing. Watch for signs of frostbite (loss of feeling along with paleness in the tip of the nose, fingers, toes, and ear lobes).
- Avoid over-exertion.
- Avoid driving in wintery weather conditions. If you do, notify others of your schedule and route.
- If the pipes freeze, remove any insulation or layers 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).

## IF YOU GET STRANDED IN YOUR VEHICLE:

- If you can, drive the car onto the shoulder of the road.
- Turn on hazard lights or hang a distress flag on an antenna, door handle, or window.
- Do not start walking unless you see a building you can take shelter.
- Stay in your car until help arrives, turn on the engine and heater about every 10 minutes each hour. Open a window slightly for ventilation.
- Check the exhaust pipe now and then and clear any snow buildup.
- Do minor exercises to keep up circulation. Try not to stay in one position for too long.

