

Across Canada, winter storms or extreme cold can occur suddenly, last for multiple days, and include large accumulations of snow, dangerously low temperatures, strong winds, sleet or freezing rain. Some winter storms can impact entire communities or regions, affecting one's safety and ability to travel. Blizzards and ice storms are common across the country. Learn how to plan and prepare before, during and after a winter storm or cold spell to be Red Cross ready.



Before

- Listen to local news and weather reports for information on changing weather conditions.
- Winterize your home by insulating walls and attics; caulking and weather stripping doors and windows; and installing storm windows or covering windows with plastic.
- Buy rock salt and sand to melt ice and improve traction.
- Make sure you have shovels and snow removal equipment handy.
- Have an alternative heat source, such as a fireplace, wood burning stove, or a generator, so you are able to keep one room in your home warm and liveable.
- Keep fire extinguishers on-hand and make sure your family knows how to use them.

During

- Listen to local news and weather reports for information on changing weather conditions.
- Bring pets/companion animals inside.
- Running water, even at a trickle, will help prevent pipes from freezing.
- Vent all fuel-burning equipment to the outside.
- Go to a designated public shelter if your home loses power or heat during periods of extreme cold.
- Avoid driving when conditions include sleet, freezing rain or drizzle, snow or dense fog. If travel is necessary, keep a disaster supplies kit in your vehicle.
- If you have to go outside, dress appropriately, and watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.

After

- Avoid travelling and listen to local news and weather reports for current road and weather conditions.
- If you've had to leave your home, check your plumbing to make sure they didn't freeze.