



Preparing for Winter Storms

As a winter storm approaches, the last thing you want is to be unprepared. These tips from the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension can help you and your family weather any storm.

- **Pull out any battery-operated lights and your battery-operated radio** in case the storm causes a power outage. Be sure to have fresh batteries on hand to power them.
- **Keep on hand a good supply of candles, matches and at least one kerosene or gas lantern** with amply fuel.
- **Turn your refrigerator and freezer up to their highest settings**, also in anticipation of a power loss. Pack food in the smallest space you can so it will insulate itself and stay cold longer.
- **Get a supply of dry ice to keep food cold and safe to eat** for longer periods of time if you know the power will be off two or more days. (Don't forget to reset your appliance controls after the threat of power loss passes.)
- **Fill large containers with water for drinking.** Power outages can leave well pumps useless and your family without drinking water.
- **Place three days' worth of nonperishable, canned and ready-to-eat foods for each family member in a safe place.** Don't forget a manually-operated can opener. Meal-in-a-can foods such as stews, soups, canned meats, beans or spaghetti require little heat for cooking and some can be eaten without cooking. Cereals, breads, dried meats and cheeses are other "no cook" possibilities. Freeze-dried meals used by campers and backpackers can be prepared with a minimum of heat.
- **Check your emergency cooking source to be sure it's operable.** Camp stoves or fireplaces may be used for cook stoves in an emergency. Check your supply of heating fuel or fire wood for heating.
- **Make certain you have a fire extinguisher available.** Electrical shorts or gas line breaks can easily cause fires. In storm situations, fire fighters may be unable to reach your home.

- **Check your first aid kit.** Make sure you have rubbing alcohol, adhesive bandages, a blanket, antibacterial ointment or cream and material to make a sling or tourniquet. Make certain family members have enough of any prescribed medicines to last them through the storm, too.
- **Have a certified mechanic winterize your vehicle.** And keep your fuel tank full to prevent water from getting into the tank and causing the engine to stall.

By following these tips, your family will be better prepared for what Mother Nature throws your way this winter.