# [***Preparation can help you survive winter storms***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:47KP-P9N0-010F-H4DT-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

Severe winter storms can bring hardship and even death. And those living in snow country should make preparations for such storms each winter.

A few of the things to keep on hand include flashlights, battery-powered radios and fresh batteries and nonperishable foods.

Arrange for emergency cooking capabilities (camping stove and fuel) but remember to do your cooking in a place with adequate ventilation.

When a winter storm hits, stay inside as much as possible. Don't overexert yourself and don't overdo the shoveling (statistics show that as many people die of heart attacks while shoveling snow as are killed by tornadoes).

When you do go out, dress warmly, with layers of loose-fitting, light-weight clothing. Wear water-repellent, wind-resistant outer garments.

If you can't stay at home during a snowstorm, it's best to take a few precautions before heading out on the road. Always check the latest weather information before starting, and stay alert for weather advisories. Travel in convoys if possible. Leave earlier than usual to allow extra time to reach your destination, and keep the gas tank at least half full.

In addition, always:

Wear your seat belt.

Keep your windshield and mirrors clear of snow and ice.

Keep a winter emergency kit in your car. Items might include a flashlight, flares, booster cables, tow chain, gloves, hat, blanket, sand or kitty litter, small shovel, boots, sleeping bag, nonperishable food, windshield scraper and first-aid kit.

Be especially cautious on bridges and ramps because of possibility of ice on the road.

Drive at appropriate speeds for the road conditions.

Keep your distance from other vehicles and obstacles.

In a skid situation, if your car has an Anti-lock Brake System (ABS) maintain continuous pressure on your brakes. If your vehicle does not have ABS, pump your brakes lightly. Turn your vehicle to follow the direction of skid (if the back of vehicle moves to the left, you should turn your steering wheel to the left).

If you do have to stop on the roadside during a snowstorm, choose a place protected by an underpass or a tree line. If you get stuck and you can't get the car to move, stay inside and wait for help. Do not attempt to walk out. It is too easy to become disoriented while walking in a snowstorm.

Protect yourself and your vehicle by making sure others can see you. Set up warning triangles or flares, lift the hood of your car -- this indicates to the highway patrol or others that you need help, use a ***cell phone*** -- if you have one -- to call for help.

Its a good idea to run the engine for short periods (10 minutes) to warm up the car. Remember to clear snow from the exhaust pipe and crack open two windows for ventilation. If you feel nauseated or sleepy, turn the engine off.

Keep an overhead light on at night to make the car visible to workers or rescue crews so that you can be seen and clap you hands and move your legs to keep your blood circulation going.

If you are with someone else, trade brief sleeping periods. Don't let everyone fall asleep at once.

Alton Thygerson, professor of health sciences at Brigham Young University, is the National Safety Council's first aid and CPR author and technical consultant. For more information, the National Safety council First Aid Handbook by Thygerson is available in local bookstores.

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