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Residents urged to prepare now for winter weather

With winter rapidly approaching, the Springfield-Greene County Office of Emergency Management urges residents to prepare for emergencies related to inclement weather.

Ryan Nicholls, Director of Emergency Management, reminds residents to be ready for hazardous winter weather conditions – including snow, ice, sustained winds and bitter cold temperatures – both at home and in their vehicles.

“With two ice storms in the last three years, no one should need a reminder of how severe weather can disrupt our lives,” said Ryan Nicholls, Director of the Office of Emergency Management. “The primary responsibility for disaster preparation lies with the individual, and it’s our hope that our residents are taking personal preparedness serious.”

Before hazardous winter weather hits, Nicholls urges residents to take these precautions at home:

- Keep a three-day supply of non-perishable foods, drinking water and necessary medical supplies.
- Have a battery- or hand crank-powered radio or television, flashlights and extra batteries.
- Keep snow shovels, rock salt for melting ice and sand or cat box filler on hand for traction.
- Make sure fireplaces, kerosene heaters and generators function properly.
- Secure firewood and fuel for heaters and generators.
- Refuel kerosene heaters outside and away from flammables.
- Insulate attics and windows.

Nicholls also recommends preparing vehicles for a winter storm, including:

- Carry a winter kit in your vehicle, including an ice scraper, blankets, winter clothing, a radio, a flashlight and batteries, drinking water, energy snacks, jumper cables and a brightly colored cloth to tie to the car’s antenna in emergency.
- Carry a shovel in your vehicle and sand or shingles, to give tires traction on ice.
- Fill your vehicle’s gas tank before winter storms hit.

In the event of severe weather, updated emergency information will be released through Nixle online alert service. Area residents are encouraged to sign up for local alerts at www.nixle.com.

For more information about disaster preparedness, visit www.dhss.mo.gov/Ready_in_3/, or call Ryan Nicholls, Director of the Springfield-Greene County Office of Emergency Management, at 869-6040, or Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Greene County Public Information Officer, at 829-6019 or 379-5713.

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