

WINTER STORMS

Indiana is forecasted to receive [more precipitation than usual](#) in winter 2019, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Every winter may not be as severe as predicted, but weather can change quickly. Preparation is key to Hoosiers staying safe for whatever the winter weather may throw at them.

WATCH VS. ADVISORY VS. WARNING

- **Watch:** Be prepared. Significant winter weather event is possible.
- **Advisory:** Be aware. Significant winter weather event will begin soon, but conditions are less serious than a warning.
- **Warning:** Take action. Severe winter weather event will begin soon. Travel is expected to become difficult or impossible at times.

FOR THE HOME

Someone doesn't have to be outside to be affected by winter weather. Staying safe while indoors is important too.

Monitor local radio, TV stations and social media websites for weather updates.

- Create an [emergency preparedness kit](#).
- Stock up on non-perishable food and water in the event of a power outage or being snowed in.
- Make sure the house is well-insulated to avoid the need of an alternative heat source.
- If [alternative heat sources](#) are needed, follow the manufacturer's instructions and always turn them off before going to bed or leaving home.
- Keep a fire extinguisher on hand in the event of a fire due to cooking or an alternative heating source.
- Know how to shut off water valves properly if a pipe were to burst due to extreme cold.
- Bring pets indoors or ensure they have a warm shelter area with unfrozen water.
- Take breaks often when shoveling snow. Approximately 100 people die every year from heart attacks they endured while [shoveling snow](#).
- Change into dry clothes after outdoor activities to prevent frostbite.



POWER OUTAGES

Winter weather can impact electric utilities. If the power goes out, it is important to follow these tips until professionals can make repairs.

- Notify the electric utility company right away.
- Gather everyone in the most insulated and interior room available.
- Turn off and unplug most electronic devices to avoid a power surge. Leave one light on to know when the power has been restored.
- Check [travel conditions](#) before determining if evacuation is necessary. If leaving the home, take medications and other must-need items, along with extra clothing, to a friend or family member's house, or a nearby shelter.
- Consider taking the time to check on neighbors, especially those with medical conditions.

DRIVING IN WINTER WEATHER

Driving during winter weather should be avoided as much as possible. However, when it can't be, follow these tips to stay safe.

- Fill a vehicle's gasoline tank before a winter storm because the fuel will have a lower chance of freezing.
- Before cold weather hits, mechanics should check the vehicle's brakes, heater, defroster, tires and windshield wipers.
- Create an emergency preparedness kit for each vehicle.
- Always wear a safety belt.
- Obey speed limits. If driving significantly below the speed limit, turn on the vehicle's hazard lights.
- Avoid using cell phones and never text while driving.
- If stranded, do not exit the vehicle to find help unless it's within 100 yards.
- Display a bright piece of clothing to signal for help if stranded.
- Floor mats can be used for extra insulation.
- To prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, never run a vehicle stuck in the snow more than 10 minutes each hour, and make sure the tailpipe is not blocked.



VEHICLE EMERGENCY KIT CHECKLIST

Make sure to prepare for emergencies that may arise while traveling in winter weather by having a vehicle emergency kit ready.

- Bag of sand
- Blanket or a sleeping bag
- Cash
- First aid kit
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Ice scraper and snow brush
- Jumper cables
- Maps
- Non-perishable, high-protein food
- Portable phone charger
- Road flares
- Shovel
- Spare clothes, mittens, scarves, hats
- Water
- Weather radio

