



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mid-Michigan Red Cross
1800 E Grand River Ave
Lansing, MI, 48912

News Release
NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Rachele Wood
Telephone: (517) 702-3336
www.midmichiganredcross.org

Mid-Michigan Should Prepare Now for Winter Storms, Urges American Red Cross

Lansing, January 6, 2010 – Winter weather is now in full swing, so the Mid-Michigan Chapter of the American Red Cross is offering residents tips for staying safe when severe weather hits.

“By preparing for winter storms, we can make our families safer,” said Mary Down, a Community Preparedness Educator with the Mid-Michigan Red Cross. “We can help you and your family create a disaster preparedness plan now that we’ve started to experience dangerously low temperatures, snow, ice and strong winds.”

Preparation can be the difference between life and death.

Safe at Home

If your electricity goes out during a storm, use only flashlights for lighting, not candles. Also, never operate a generator inside your home, including the basement or garage. Do not hook up a generator directly to your home's wiring. The safest thing to do is to connect the equipment you want to power directly to the outlets on the generator.

If you must go outside—

- Avoid overexertion, such as shoveling heavy snow, pushing a car or walking in deep snow. The strain from the cold and the hard labor may cause a heart attack, so take frequent breaks and stay hydrated.
- Wear layered lightweight clothing, which will keep you warmer than a single heavy coat.
- Wear waterproof, insulated boots.
- Walk carefully on snowy, icy sidewalks.
- Maintain heating equipment and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected every year.
- Running water, even at a trickle, helps to prevent pipes from freezing.



---more---

Travel Safety

The Red Cross advises against traveling by car in a winter storm, but if you must, follow these tips:

- Carry an [emergency preparedness kit](#) in the trunk, including extra clothes, jackets, blankets, and a shovel.
- Keep your car's gas tank full for emergency use and to keep the fuel line from freezing.
- Let someone know your destination, your route, and when you expect to arrive. If your car gets stuck along the way, help can be sent along your predetermined route.

If you do get stuck . . .

- Stay with your car. Do not try to walk to safety.
- Tie a brightly colored cloth (preferably red) to the antenna for rescuers to see.
- Start the car and use the heater for about 10 minutes every hour. Keep the exhaust pipe clear so fumes won't back up in the car.
- Leave the overhead light on when the engine is running so that you can be seen.

For more information on winter safety, to get your own disaster preparedness kit you're your home or car, or to learn more about the Red Cross, visit www.midmichiganredcross.org.

###

About the American Red Cross:

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies nearly half of the nation's blood; teaches lifesaving skills; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a charitable organization — not a government agency — and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit www.redcross.org.