

BE Prepared: Snowed In Winter Safety Kit

Winters in Minnesota are unpredictable. From mild winters with little more than snow flurries to winters of freezing rain and snow-piling blizzards. Native Minnesotans have always known they need to prepare for winter, but as times and technology have changed, preparations may not have.

Be ready for whatever winter has in store. Most Minnesotans have an ample supply of necessary food items to sustain every member in the home for at least three days. But if you are snowed or iced in and cannot leave the home or if your electricity goes out, do you have:

- Non-perishable items that can be eaten without heating
- Baby foods or family members with special needs
- Crank and/or battery-operated radio *and* flashlight with extra batteries in the necessary sizes
- Candles and matches
- Bottled water and juices
- Extra prescription medication
- Toilet paper, diapers, feminine hygiene supplies

If you heat with wood, make sure your wood supply is close enough that you can step out and get it in blizzard conditions, without losing your way back.

Remember, **liquid-fueled Space/Portable Heaters** are ***not generally recommended*** for use inside the home for several reasons. If you **need** to use one in case of an emergency:

- ✓ Use ***extreme caution*** with proper openings to the outside is necessary to remove the possibility of suffocation. Keep a window in the room open at least one inch.
- ✓ Follow manufacturers' recommendations ***faithfully***.
- ✓ Keep doors open to the rest of the house.
- ✓ Follow the manufacturer's instructions to prevent carbon monoxide production.
- ✓ Units must be cooled before refueling; this should take place ***outside*** of the structure.

Keep your family safe this winter and every winter, by planning ahead. For more information on keeping your family safe and healthy, call Aitkin County Health & Human Services at 927-7200 or 800-328-3744 or Ready.gov.