



BRUCE A. BLAKEMAN  
NASSAU COUNTY EXECUTIVE

CERT



NASSAU COUNTY



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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COUNTY, STATE  
&  
FEDERAL  
**ONE TEAM**

# Navigating Winter's Wrath: Essential Winter Weather Safety Tips for Homeowners

R. DeLucia

As the mercury dips and winter unfolds its chilly embrace, homeowners face a unique set of challenges. The cold season, while often picturesque, brings with it the potential for hazardous conditions such as freezing temperatures, snowfall, ice storms, and more. Preparing for these conditions is vital to ensure the safety and well-being of both the home and its inhabitants. This article will explore essential winter weather safety tips that every homeowner should know.

## Understanding Winter Weather Risks

Winter weather can be unpredictable and harsh. The primary concerns for homeowners include:

**Frozen Pipes:** Water expands as it freezes, which can lead to burst pipes and significant water damage.

**Ice Dams:** When ice accumulates at the edge of roofs, it can create dams that cause water to pool and leak into the home.

**Power Outages:** Heavy snowfall and ice can disrupt power lines, leading to prolonged outages.

**Slippery Surfaces:** Icy conditions can make walkways and driveways treacherous.

## Preparing Your Home

### 1. Insulate to Protect

Insulating your home is key to preventing heat loss and avoiding issues like frozen pipes. Ensure that walls, attics, and basements are properly insulated. Pay special attention to areas where water supply lines are located.

Continued on next page

## **2. Seal Drafts**

Cold air can enter through gaps in windows and doors. Use weather stripping or caulk to seal these drafts. This not only prevents cold air from entering but also helps in reducing heating bills.

## **3. Maintain Heating Systems**

Have your heating system serviced by a professional before the onset of winter to ensure it's in good working order. Remember to replace filters regularly.

## **4. Prepare for Power Outages**

Keep a supply of flashlights, batteries, blankets, and non-perishable food items in case of a power outage. Consider investing in a generator for backup power.

## **5. Prevent Ice Dams**

Proper attic insulation and ventilation can prevent the formation of ice dams. Keep gutters clean and free of debris to allow melting snow to flow freely.

## **6. Clear Snow and Ice**

Keep driveways and walkways clear of snow and ice to prevent accidents. Use salt or sand to improve traction on slippery surfaces.

## **Personal Safety Measures**

### **1. Dress Appropriately**

Layer clothing to stay warm and dry. Outer layers should be water-resistant, and don't forget hats, gloves, and insulated boots.

### **2. Be Cautious with Heating Devices**

Space heaters should be kept away from flammable materials. Never use a stove or oven to heat your home as this can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning.

### **3. Know the Signs of Frostbite and Hypothermia**

Frostbite can cause loss of feeling and color in affected areas, particularly the nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, or toes. Hypothermia occurs when the body loses heat faster than it can produce it, causing abnormally low body temperature. Recognize the signs and seek medical attention if symptoms are severe.

#### 4. Stay Informed

Keep an eye on weather forecasts and heed any warnings or advisories issued by local authorities.

Winter demands respect and preparedness. By taking proactive steps to secure and maintain their homes, homeowners can mitigate the risks posed by winter weather. Equally important is personal safety, as understanding and preparing for the cold can prevent accidents and health issues.

As we navigate the icy grip of winter, let's remember that with adequate preparation, we can not only survive but enjoy the beauty and tranquility that this season brings. Stay warm, stay safe, and let your winter be as peaceful as a gentle snowfall.



## WINTER CAR KIT CHECKLIST



- Windshield Scraper
- Small Broom
- Flashlight
- Blanket
- Spare Radio with Batteries
- Snacks or Energy Type Food
- Water
- Jumper Cables
- Flares & Matches
- Shovel
- Sand or Shingles for Tire Traction
- Hats, Socks, Mittens
- First Aid Kit
- Fourescent Distress Flag



Source: Ready.gov



# Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES)



Our scheduled December General Membership meeting was canceled so we could combine our efforts and participate at the All County CERT Meeting. RACES had a table display explaining who we are and what we do. In addition we set up a working High Frequency (HF) radio station and a Software Defined Radio (SDR) display. Mike KD2KOE and Bob KC2PSN also spoke on emergency communication and other CERT related topics. Jim Mezey W2KFV, who is Section Manager from ARRL gave an overview of Amateur Radio and how to get started in the many areas of the hobby. Jim also touched on HRU. What is HRU you ask? HRU or Ham Radio University is a day of learning on many different aspects of Amateur Radio and related topics. It will be held on January 6, 2024 at LIU Post College's Hillwood Commons Student Center. For more information the HRU flyer is below or you can go to <https://hamradiouniversity.org/>.

Our next RACES / CERT Communications meeting will take place on Thursday January 3, 2024 in the OEM Lecture Hall at 7:30pm 510 Grumman Road West, Bethpage NY. At this meeting we will be closing out our 2023 ICS training, giving our year end review as well what has been planned for 2024. As always, you are all invited to attend the General Membership meeting. We hope to see you at the meeting and HRU.



*The Officers and Members of Nassau County RACES and CERT Communications wish you and your families a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year*

73  
RACES Leadership  
Website: [www.nassauraces.net](http://www.nassauraces.net)  
Email: [nassaucountymy.races@gmail.com](mailto:nassaucountymy.races@gmail.com)



**If you SEE Something SAY Something**

# HOW TO STAY SAFE WHEN A WINTER STORM THREATENS



**Know your area's risk for winter storms.** Extreme winter weather can leave communities without utilities or other services for long periods of time.

**Prepare your home to keep out the cold with insulation, caulking, and weather stripping.** Learn how to keep pipes from freezing. Install and test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors with battery backups.

**Pay attention to weather reports and warnings of freezing weather and winter storms.** Sign up for your community's warning system. The Emergency Alert System (EAS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio also provide emergency alerts.

**Gather supplies in case you need to stay home for several days without power.** Keep in mind each person's specific needs, including medication. Do not forget the needs of pets. Have extra batteries for radios and flashlights.

**Create an emergency supply kit for your car.** Include jumper cables, sand, a flashlight, warm clothes, blankets, bottled water, and non-perishable snacks. Keep the gas tank full.

**Learn the signs of and basic treatments for frostbite and hypothermia.** For more information, visit: [www.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/staysafe/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/staysafe/index.html).



**Stay off roads if at all possible.** If trapped in your car, stay inside.

**Limit your time outside.** If you need to go outside, wear layers of warm clothing. Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.

**Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Only use generators and grills outdoors and away from windows.** Never heat your home with a gas stovetop or oven.

**Reduce the risk of a heart attack. Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow.**

**Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia and begin treatment right away.**

**Check on neighbors.** Older adults and young children are more at risk in extreme cold.



**Frostbite** causes loss of feeling and color around the face, fingers, and toes.

- **Signs:** Numbness, white or grayish-yellow skin, and firm or waxy skin.
- **Actions:** Go to a warm room. Soak in warm water. Use body heat to warm. Do not massage or use a heating pad.

**Hypothermia** is an unusually low body temperature. A temperature below 95 degrees is an emergency.

- **Signs:** Shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech, and drowsiness.
- **Actions:** Go to a warm room. Warm the center of the body first—chest, neck, head, and groin. Keep dry and wrapped up in warm blankets, including the head and neck.

## Take an Active Role In Your Safety

Go to [Ready.gov](http://Ready.gov) and search for **winter storm**. Download the **FEMA app** to get more information about preparing for a **winter storm**.



# PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR WINTER

## BEFORE COLD WEATHER SETS IN:



### Check sprinkler or irrigation systems

Make sure you've turned everything off and fully drained the system.



### Identify your home's freezing points

Check your home for pipes in areas that might be prone to freezing, such as crawl spaces, unheated rooms, basements, garages, and exterior walls.



### Know how to shut off your water

Locate your main water shut-off valve. Hang the I.D. tag located on the back of this insert on the valve, so you can find it quickly in an emergency.



### Strengthen your defenses

Eliminate sources of cold air near water lines by closing off crawl spaces, fixing drafty windows, insulating walls and attics, and plugging drafts around doors.



### Protect your pipes

Where pipes are exposed to cold, wrap them with insulation or heat tape (even fabric or newspaper can help).

## WHEN TEMPERATURES STAY BELOW FREEZING:



### Give pipes a helping hand

If pipes run through cabinets or vanities, open the doors to let warmer room temperatures flow in.



### Keep water working

Keep water moving through the pipes by allowing a small trickle of water to run. The cost of the extra water is typically lower than the cost of repairing a broken pipe.

## BUT IF YOUR PIPES DO FREEZE:



### Shut off the water immediately

Don't attempt to thaw pipes without turning off the main shut-off valve.



### Thaw pipes with warm air

You can melt the frozen water in the pipe by warming the air around it with a hair dryer or space heater. Be sure not to leave space heaters unattended and avoid the use of kerosene heaters or open flames.



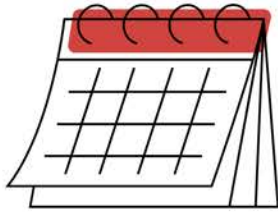
### Be careful turning water back on

Once pipes are thawed, slowly turn the water back on and check pipes and joints for any cracks or leaks that might have been caused by freezing.

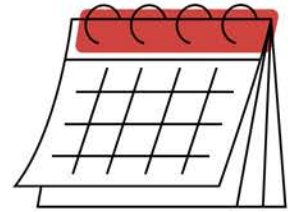
**AVOID COSTLY REPAIRS:** If the meter freezes, the homeowner/business is responsible for the cost to replace or repair the meter. With a little attention, you can help prevent pipes and meters from freezing in your home. The cost to replace a meter is based on the size of the meter. A 5/8" meter is \$130 to replace, a 3/4" meter is \$150 and a 1" meter is \$180.

**If a blizzard traps a vehicle and it's stuck, VDOT recommends the following:**

- Pull off the highway, turn on hazard lights and hang a distress flag from the radio antenna or window.
- Make yourself visible to rescuers. Including turning on the dome light at night when running the engine, tying a colored cloth, preferably red, to your antenna or door and raising the hood to indicate trouble after snow stops falling.
- Remain in the vehicle where rescuers are most likely to find you, according to VDOT. Do not set out on foot unless you can see a building close by where you know you can take shelter. Be careful, distances are distorted by blowing snow. A building may seem close but could be too far to walk to in deep snow.
- Run the engine and heater for about 10 minutes each hour to keep warm. When the engine is running, open an upwind window slightly for ventilation. This will protect you from possible carbon monoxide poisoning. **Also, periodically clear snow from the exhaust pipe.**
- Exercise to maintain body heat but avoid overexertion. Vigorously move your arms, legs, fingers and toes to keep blood circulating and to keep warm.
- In extreme cold, use seat covers and floor mats for insulation, according to VDOT. Huddle with passengers and use your coat for a blanket.
- Take turns sleeping. One person should be awake at all times to look for rescue crews.
- Drink fluids to avoid dehydration.
- Be careful not to waste battery power. Balance electrical energy needs – the use of lights, heat and radio -with supply.
- Turn on the inside light at night so work crews or rescuers can see you.
- If stranded in a remote area, stomp large block letters in an open area spelling out HELP or SOS and line with rocks or tree limbs to attract the attention of rescue personnel who may be surveying the area by airplane.
- Leave the car and proceed on foot – if necessary – once the storm passes.



# Planned Events & Trainings



FEMA offers a large variety of online courses that are free of charge and will help to further your preparedness education. If you do not have a FEMA ID, you can register for one here.

[:https://cdp.dhs.gov/femasid](https://cdp.dhs.gov/femasid)



**Emergency Management Institute -  
Independent Study (IS) | Course List**

FEMA Emergency Management Institute (EMI)  
Independent Study Course List

[fema.gov](https://www.fema.gov)

No CERT Division 1 or 2 meetings have been scheduled for January or February.



*Nassau County*

News



**COASTAL FLOOD WARNING REMAINS IN EFFECT FROM 4 PM THIS AFTERNOON TO 1 PM EST WEDNESDAY**

**\* WHAT...1 to 2 ft of inundation above ground level expected in vulnerable areas near the waterfront and shoreline with this evening high tide cycle. 2 to 2 1/2 feet of inundation above ground level expected in vulnerable areas near the waterfront and shoreline with the Wednesday morning high tide cycle with locally 3 ft possible of inundation possible.**

**\* WHERE...Northeast Suffolk, Southwest Suffolk, Southeast Suffolk and Southern Nassau Counties.**

**\* WHEN...From 4 PM this afternoon to 1 PM EST Wednesday.**

**\* COASTAL FLOOD IMPACTS...Widespread moderate flooding of vulnerable areas near the waterfront and shoreline, particularly Wednesday morning. Expect 2 to 2 1/2 ft, locally 3 feet of inundation above ground level in low lying, vulnerable areas. This will result in numerous road closures and cause widespread flooding of low lying property including parking lots, parks, lawns and homes/businesses with basements near the waterfront. Vehicles parked in vulnerable areas near the waterfront will likely become flooded. Flooding will also extend inland from the waterfront along tidal rivers and bays.**

**\* SHORELINE IMPACTS...**Large breaking waves of 15 to 20 ft along the oceanfront will result in widespread dune erosion and damage to dune structures. Scattered overwashes are expected, resulting in some flooding of roadways and vulnerable structures behind protective dunes. Isolated breaches or inundation of the barrier island is possible where dune structures have been severely compromised by previous storms.

**\* ADDITIONAL DETAILS...**Peak surge of 4 to 5 ft will likely be between times of high tide this evening and Wednesday morning. Tidal piling will likely inhibit the recession of water before the Wednesday AM high tide, which could cause locally major flooding for area from Freeport eastward. Of particular concern are areas along the eastern Great South Bay from Lindenhurst to Mastic and along the bay side of Fire Island, where west to southwest gale winds may pile waters Wednesday morning into afternoon along with 2 to 3 ft of wave action. Residents in vulnerable communities should prepare for the potential of major coastal flooding (3ft of inundation above ground).

Please send in any photos you have taken of news worthy items or from any CERT events that you have attended and I will select some to be used in the newsletter. Send images to:  
[rdelucia@nassaucountyny.gov](mailto:rdelucia@nassaucountyny.gov)

# Calendar of Events

## January 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4 RACES Meeting 7:30pm	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	30			

## February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1 RACES Meeting 7:30pm	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		



**CERT Division Meetings**  
**7:00pm**



**RACES Meeting**  
**7:30pm**

### Important Dates

**RACES Meeting** - 1st Thursday of the month - 1/4/24

**CERT Division 1 Meetings** - No February Meeting Scheduled  
 Wednesday – March 6, 2024  
 Wednesday – June 5, 2024  
 Wednesday – September 4, 2024  
 Wednesday – December 4, 2024



We would like to take this moment to extend our warmest wishes for a Happy New Year to each and every one of you. Your selfless dedication as members of the Community Emergency Response Team is nothing short of inspiring. You have demonstrated incredible resilience, compassion, and teamwork, embodying the true spirit of community service. As we welcome the new year, we are filled with gratitude and hope. Gratitude for your invaluable contributions to our community's safety and well-being, and hope for a year that brings us continued strength, growth, and opportunities to make a positive impact. May this new year be as rewarding and fulfilling as the work you do, and may it bring you and your loved ones health, happiness, and prosperity.

With heartfelt appreciation and best wishes for 2024,

**NASSAU COUNTY CERT COORDINATORS**

**BOB CHIZ & RICK DELUCIA**  
**OEMCERT@NASSAUCOUNTYNY.GOV**

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