

# STORM SEASON SAFETY



## STAY SAFE IN COLD TEMPERATURES

Hey Californians! As cooler months bring new challenges to our state, like cold temperatures, Listos California is taking action to protect our communities.

While the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and first responders across our state prepare for this climate-driven extreme weather, there are a few simple steps YOU can take today to keep yourself, your loved ones and neighbors safe during cold temperatures.



### LEARN THE SIGNS OF HYPOTHERMIA AND FROSTBITE

When temperatures drop, it is essential to keep warm and to do it safely. Knowing what to do in cooler temperatures can save your life. The California Department of Public Health recommends learning the signs and how to help someone with hypothermia or frostbite:

- **Hypothermia** is when body temperature drops to an unsafe level.
  - Look out for heavy shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech or drowsiness.
  - Get to a warm place and warm the center of the body first. Stay dry and wrap up in warm blankets. Drink warm liquids.
- **Frostbite** occurs when skin becomes so cold, blood vessels contract, reducing blood flow and oxygen to affected body parts.
  - Look out for numbness and loss of color around the face, fingers and toes. Also look for white or grayish-yellow-looking skin, or firm or waxy skin.
  - Get to a warm place and soak the affected part or entire body in very warm but not hot water. You can also use body heat.
- When in doubt, seek medical attention.



### PREPARE FOR COLD TEMPERATURES

- Pay attention to weather reports and warnings of winter storms and cold conditions. Sign up for local emergency alerts at [ListosCalifornia.org/Alerts](https://ListosCalifornia.org/Alerts).
- Make sure you have enough warm clothing, such as hats, gloves and blankets for everyone in your household.
- 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.
- Prepare for power outages. Have enough water and food that does not need refrigeration for every member of your household. Fully charge backup batteries, prepare to keep medicines cold and medical devices charged.
- Sign up for alerts through your energy company so you can be notified about any energy issues. If you use electric medical and assistive devices, be sure to enroll in a medical baseline program to ensure you're safe if the power goes off.





# STAY SAFE IN COLD TEMPERATURES



## STAY SAFE DURING COLD TEMPERATURES

- Heat your home safely:
  - Do not use stoves, camp stoves or gas/charcoal grills for heat inside your home. The fumes are deadly.
  - Only use a generator outside, at least 20 feet from doors and windows. Do not use generators in wet conditions. Never use a generator indoors. Its poisonous exhaust can kill in minutes.
  - Use blankets, sleeping bags, warm winter coats, an up-to-code fireplace with dry firewood, portable space heaters or kerosene heaters if they are legal in your area. Keep all portable heaters at least 3 feet away from flammable objects.
- Close off unused rooms to avoid wasting heat. Seal cracks under doors with towels or rags and close curtains to keep in as much heat as possible.
- Keep blood circulating by moving around a few times an hour. Move your arms and legs and wiggle your fingers and toes.
- Cold air is very dry. Stay well hydrated with water or sports drinks.
- Know where you will go if your home becomes too cold. You could go to a friend's house, community center, shopping mall or public library. Check with local emergency officials about warming centers available near you.
- Limit your time outside. If you need to go outside, wear layers of warm clothing. Protect your nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers and toes by wearing gloves, scarves, socks and a hat. These areas are the first to be at risk for frostbite.
- Stay off roads and avoid driving, if at all possible. Roads and freezing temperatures can quickly become dangerous. Call 911 if you have an emergency.



## LOOK OUT FOR OTHERS

- Check frequently on neighbors who may have limited access to heat.
- For people who are 65 or older, cold temperatures can be especially dangerous. Friends, family and neighbors of older adults should check in frequently to make sure that their homes are adequately heated and that they are safe.
- If you have pets, bring them indoors and do not leave them outside overnight.



## RECOVER FROM COLD TEMPERATURES

- Check your home for any structural damage that could make living there unsafe, such as damaged plumbing or heating systems.
- Document and take photos if you have storm damage. Find other recovery resources on government websites.
- Continue to protect yourself from cold by wearing warm, loose-fitting, lightweight clothing in several layers. Stay indoors, if possible.

