

Preparing for Winter

Winter time on the Prairies offers many enjoyable activities like hockey, skiing, snowmobiling, and ice fishing.

Unfortunately, winter can also bring extreme weather conditions which result in icy roads, blizzards, and power outages. The potential and risks of experiencing one of these situations is serious and may be life threatening.

Slips, Trips, and Falls

When it comes to winter safety, slip, trip and fall prevention can **never** be over emphasized. As temperatures drop and snow flies, this causes surfaces to become quite slippery and increases your risk. Snow and ice happen -- **slips, trips and falls don't have to!**

Reason for Slips, Trips, and Falls	Dangers of Slip, Trip, and Fall	Prevention
Objects or flaws on a walking surface	Severe Head Injury Back Injury Broken Bones Sprains or Strains Lacerations Paralysis Death	Shorten your step, point toes up, keep your body centered over your feet, and adjust your walking speed when changing walking surfaces.
Slippery walking surface (metal/painted wood/concrete)		Use sidewalks, handrails, level walking surfaces (3-point contact) as much as possible including entering and existing your vehicle.
Limited visibility		Shovel snow and use sand/salt as traction aids on icy surfaces.
Inadequate or improper footwear		Use traction aids/non-skid footwear and remove snow and ice buildup on footwear
Lack of focus when walking		Stay alert! Being aware of changing surfaces when you walk is a must!



Winter Driving

Taking the necessary steps to plan and prepare for the possibility of a winter driving emergency begins by checking weather and road conditions as well as having an emergency kit for both your home and vehicle. Before heading out, be sure to check the Highway Hotline at hotline.gov.sk.ca/map for road conditions, and stay home if travel is not recommended.

Blizzards: The most dangerous of winter storms; combination of falling, blowing and drifting snow, winds of at least 40 km/h, visibility less than one kilometre and temperatures below -10°C. They can last from a few hours to several days.

Heavy snowfall: Snowfalls of at least 10 centimetres in 12 hours, or at least 15 centimetres in 24 hours;

Freezing rain or drizzle: May lead to ice storms, with ice covering roads, trees, power lines, etc.

Cold snap: Temperatures that fall rapidly over a very short period of time, causing very icy conditions.

Winds: Conditions associated with blizzards causing blowing and drifting snow, reducing visibility, and wind chill factor.

Black ice: Thin layer of ice on the road that can be difficult to see or can make the road look black and shiny. The road freezes more quickly in shaded areas, on bridges and on overpasses when it is cold. These areas remain frozen long after the sun has risen.

Slush: Wet snow can make for slushy roads. Heavy slush can build up in the wheel wells of your vehicle and can affect your ability to steer. Large trucks and buses can blow slush and snow onto your windshield, leading to a sudden loss of visibility.

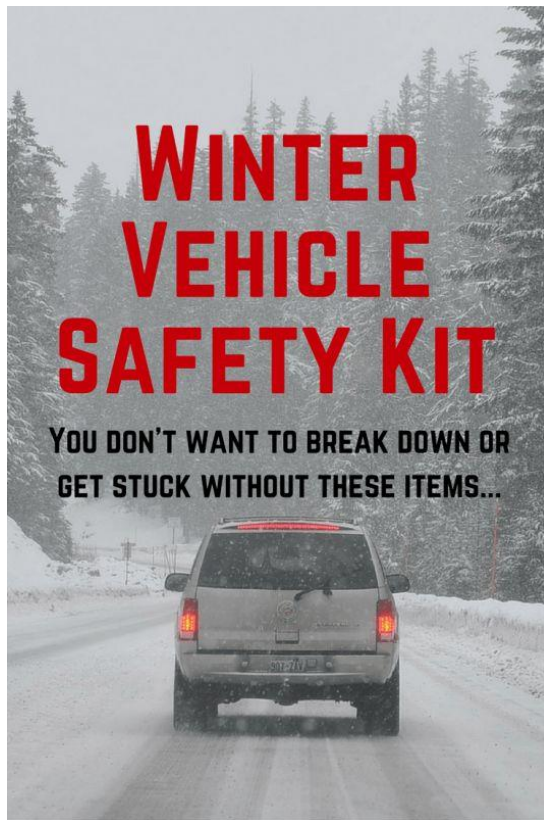


If a winter storm develops while you are travelling, seriously consider stopping for the day in a city or town rather than continuing.

If you do find yourself stranded in a winter storm, remember to:

- ❄️ **Remain calm!** Stay with your vehicle.
- ❄️ Do **not** exhaust yourself. Activities such as shoveling in the intense cold can be deadly.
- ❄️ Keep the engine off as much as possible. Clear the exhaust pipe of snow and ice.
- ❄️ If possible, use a candle placed inside a deep can instead of the car heater to warm up. If you must run the engine to get heat, listen to news reports, charge your cellphone, but do not run out of gas or drain your battery.
- ❄️ Turn on warning/hazard lights or set up road flares to make your car visible. Keep watching for other cars and emergency responders. Keep clothing dry; wet clothing can lead to dangerous loss of body heat,
- ❄️ Stay moving to maintain circulation; stay awake!

Winter Vehicle Safety Kit¹



Always have a winter safety kit in your vehicle.

A winter vehicle safety kit should include the following:

- Non-perishable foods; energy bars such as energy bars, mixed nuts, bottled water (replace every six months)
- Blanket
- Extra clothing and shoes or boots
- First aid kit with seatbelt cutter
- Small shovel, scraper and snowbrush
- Candle in a deep can and matches
- Wind-up flashlight
- Whistle—in case you need to attract attention
- Roadmaps
- Copy of your emergency plan

Items to keep in your trunk:


- Sand, salt or cat litter (non-clumping) to use as traction aides
- Antifreeze and windshield washer fluid
- Tow rope, warning light, road flares
- Jumper cables
- Fire extinguisher

Home Emergency Kit¹

A home emergency kit is something you should always have on hand in case of a power outage. Your kit should have all your essentials and be able to sustain you and your family for 72 hours. Here are 12 items you should include in your kit:

1. **Bottled Water** - Each person in your household should have two litres of water per day. It is important to remain hydrated. For cooking and cleaning, allow for an additional two litres of water per person.
2. **Food** - It is important your emergency kit has food that won't spoil. Canned food, energy bars and dried foods are best a best choice. Remember to replace the food once a year. A manual can opener and a few utensils should also be included.
3. **Extra set of car and house keys** - Keep an extra pair of keys in your kit which will save you from having to try and find yours with the power out.
4. **Small change** - Keep some money in your kit (change and small bills are best).
5. **Flashlight and extra batteries** - Since natural light will be your only source of light, flashlights are crucial. Make sure you have extra batteries on hand.
6. **Battery-powered or crank radio** - Radios keep you updated for what is going on in your area.
7. **First aid kit** - Make sure you have a well-stocked first aid kit ready.
8. **Basic hand tools** - Hammer, scissors, screwdrivers, pliers and a pocket knife are good to have on hand.

9. **Sleeping bag or warm blankets.** It's important to stay warm, and if you're without heat your home will get cold fast. Make sure there is a sleeping bag for each person in the household, or have extra blankets on hand.
10. **Candles and matches/lighter.** Make sure candles are in sturdy holders and do not burn candles unattended.
11. **Special need items.** This includes prescription medications and infant formula, in case you don't have access to a pharmacy or grocery store and run out.
12. **Toiletries.** Items such as toilet paper, hand sanitizer and other personal items should be included in the emergency kit. In case you run out, you're prepared.



Get Your Kit Together

During an emergency, you may be responsible for the health and safety of your family for an extended period of time. The Health and Safety team recommends you store at least 72 hours of supplies.

To learn more about emergency preparedness, how to create a household emergency plan and build your home emergency kit, visit the [Government of Canada's GetPrepared.gc.ca](https://www.getprepared.gc.ca).

¹Tips provided by Public Safety Canada, in cooperation with Transport Canada.