

How to Keep Warm in the Cold



As temperatures drop, we're reminded to take out our winter clothes to keep warm while working or playing outdoors. To enjoy the winter safely, it's important to keep your body temperature up. You can do this by:

- Drink enough water to stay hydrated
- Stay active and moving while outdoors
- Shivering is your body's way of trying to keep itself moving to heat it up

How well your body keeps heat in and how much cold you can stand depends on the size and shape of your body, how much body fat you have, your blood flow and circulation, and what you're wearing. Since the human body loses heat faster when it's in water, you should avoid thin ice or open water during the winter months. If you, or someone you know falls into cold water make sure they get into dry clothes, find shelter and call for medical attention.



Clothes

When working or playing outdoors, choose clothes that suit the temperature, weather conditions, and the level and length of activity. Protective clothing is needed for work at or below 4 degrees Celsius. Clothing should be worn in multiple layers which provide better protection than a single thick jacket or sweater. The inner layer should provide insulation and be able to keep moisture away from the skin to help keep it dry for example, nylon or polyester. Try to keep this inside layer clean so that it can provide better insulation. Layers should be easy to open or take off before you get too warm, which will reduce sweating when working or playing hard. For activities in wet conditions, the outer layer of clothing should be waterproof.

It's extremely important to remember that body heat is lost through the head so wearing a hat will keep you warmer longer. Also wear mittens or gloves, scarves, appropriate shoes or boots (waterproof and insulated) and layered socks. Don't forget, if you're working outside, or enjoying an activity like skiing or skating, wear face, eye, and/or head protection. One thing to avoid is cotton material because it gets damp or wet quickly, and then doesn't keep heat in. Wool and synthetic fibers are two materials that when wet, can still keep the heat in.

Extra clothing is important in case the ones you're wearing become wet from rain, sweating or water. A few things to keep in mind while doing outside activities during the winter include wearing

- winter jacket (water and wind proof)
- snow pants
- a hat
- mittens or gloves
- scarves
- appropriate footwear (waterproof and insulated)
- layered socks
- face and eye protection

Preparing Your Car For Winter Emergencies



Winters in Nova Scotia are often unpredictable. While most roads are cleared during the winter, unexpected storms do happen. If you get caught in one, you could be stuck in your car for hours. That's why it's important that you have a winter survival kit for your car.

In bad weather your trip will take longer so make sure your gas tank is full before heading on longer drives, out on the highways, or to less populated areas. If you do get stuck, check that your exhaust pipe is clear and slightly crack your window while the car is running to let out any carbon monoxide that may build up.

It's also important that you check road conditions before leaving home. Nova Scotia road conditions can be found here 511.gov.ns.ca/map/.

For more information and measures to take if stuck or stranded in the snow visit ccohs.ca/oshanswers/safety_haz/icesnow.html



Your winter survival kit for your car should include

- Blankets
- First aid kit
- A can and waterproof matches (to melt snow for drinking water; eating snow will lower your body temperature)
- Windshield scraper
- Booster cables
- Road maps
- Mobile phone
- Compass
- Tool kit
- Paper towels
- Bag of sand or cat litter (to pour on ice or snow for added traction)
- Tow rope
- Tire chains (for areas with heavy snow)
- Collapsible shovel
- Container of water (allow space in the bottle for when the water freezes!)
- Nutritious, non-perishable food and a can opener
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Canned compressed air with sealant (for emergency tire repair)
- Brightly coloured cloth (so other cars or rescue crews can see you; tie it to your antenna)

Preparing Your Home For Winter Emergencies



Preparing your home for winter also means being ready in case your power goes out, or your furnace breaks down. If the temperature inside your home starts to drop it's important to find ways to keep your core body temperature up. Most people will use space heaters and fireplaces to stay warm, but these increase the risk of fires, as well as carbon monoxide poisoning.

To be ready if the power goes out, always have a winter survival kit for your home which would include food that doesn't need cooking or refrigeration like crackers and dried fruit. If you have infants or young children, make sure you have extra baby food and formula on hand (if needed). It's also a good idea to have extra water stored in clean containers, medicines and a first aid kit.

A few other things to have on hand for a cold emergency include:

- Another way to heat your home during a power failure (dry firewood for fireplace or wood stove; kerosene for a kerosene heater)
- Furnace fuel (coal, propane, or oil)
- Electric space heater with automatic shut-off switch and non-glowing elements
- Blankets
- Matches
- Multipurpose, dry-chemical fire extinguisher
- First aid kit with instruction manual
- Flashlight or battery-powered lantern
- Battery-powered radio, clock or watch
- Extra batteries
- Non-electric can opener
- Snow shovel
- Rock salt
- Special needs items (diapers, hearing aid batteries, medications, etc...)

If you plan to use a fireplace or wood stove for emergency heating, have your chimney or flue inspected each year. If you are using a fireplace, kerosene heater, or space heater, make sure smoke detectors and battery-operated carbon monoxide detectors are placed near the area to be heated. Test them monthly, and replace batteries twice yearly.

