

Governor Ted Strickland



American Red Cross  
Emergency Management Association of Ohio  
National Weather Service  
Ohio Citizen Corps  
Ohio Department of Aging  
Ohio Department of Commerce-State Fire Marshal  
Ohio News Network

Ohio Department of Education  
Ohio Department of Health  
Ohio Department of Insurance  
Ohio Department of Natural Resources  
Ohio Department of Public Safety-EMA  
Ohio Insurance Institute

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

November 15, 2007

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**Early November Chill is Precursor to Winter Weather Preparedness**  
*Winter Safety Awareness Week is November 11-17*

(Columbus, OH) – With issued frost advisories and morning temperatures dipping into the 30s, Ohioans need no further reminder that winter is on its way. In coordinating efforts with the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness, Gov. Ted Strickland has proclaimed the week of Nov. 11 through 17 as Ohio’s Winter Safety Awareness Week to help encourage households and businesses to prepare now for winter weather.

“Now is the perfect time to restock your home and vehicle disaster supply kits: refresh your canned foods and bottled water; check your batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors; and store extra sweaters, blankets and outer wear,” said Gov. Strickland. “I encourage every Ohioan to review your emergency plans and conduct safety drills – even in the cold. Everyone needs to know what to do in the event of a winter storm emergency.”

The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness recommends the following in preparing for the cold, winter months:

***Modify your disaster preparedness plan.*** Every home, school and business should have written plans for the different types of disasters that can affect your establishment. Everyone should know what to do in the event of a snow or ice storm, a prolonged power outage, winter flooding or fire. Prepare and practice drills that require sheltering in place and evacuation/escape routes. Have an emergency contact list and establish a meeting point outside of the home, school or business, so others will know where to find or meet you. Invest in a NOAA Weather Radio to stay updated on severe weather watches and warnings.

***Prepare winter disaster kits for the home and vehicle.*** Winter emergency kits should include warm clothing, blankets, flashlights, batteries, coats, hats, gloves, a battery-operated radio, first aid kit, and enough nonperishable food and water (one gallon per person, per day) to sustain each family member for at least three days. Every home should have properly working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Ensure that vehicles have tune ups/maintenance checks and ensure that all vehicles keep at least a half tank of fuel to reduce the chance of fuel-line freeze up.

***Prepare and protect your home for winter.*** Cut and remove low-hanging and dead tree branches. Ice and snow, combined with winter winds, can cause tree limbs to snap. Clean your gutters. Snow and ice can build up quickly if gutters are clogged with debris. Have auxiliary heaters, furnaces and fireplaces maintenance-checked or serviced before use. If using an electric heating element, never leave it unattended or fall asleep while it's plugged in and on. Check your homeowner's insurance policy to know its coverage. Flood insurance is needed to cover any flood-related damage.

The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness is an advocate for family emergency preparedness and is comprised of representatives from the American Red Cross, Emergency Management Association of Ohio, National Weather Service, Ohio Citizen Corps, Ohio Department of Public Safety's Emergency Management Agency, Ohio Insurance Institute, Ohio News Network, Ohio Department of Commerce - State Fire Marshal, and the Ohio Departments of Aging, Education, Health, Insurance and Natural Resources.

For additional information on severe weather preparedness, visit the committee's Web site at [www.weathersafety.ohio.gov](http://www.weathersafety.ohio.gov).

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