



U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER

4905 5th Ave. Fort Rucker, AL 36362-5363
Comm. (334) 255-3770 Fax (334) 255-2266
<https://safety.army.mil>

Resource Document Home and Family Safety *Preparing a House for Winter*

Lori Yerdon

lori.a.yerdon.civ@mail.mil

334-255-3557

Strategic Communication Directorate

U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center

August 14, 2012

Narrative:

Wintertime usually brings frigid temperatures, inclement weather and the likelihood of power outages and being stranded in the house. Not overestimating the weather and preparing beforehand are just a few of the ways to ensure the safety of you and your loved ones this winter.

Preparing a home for cold weather ahead of time may save you some anguish down the road. On duty, Soldiers winterize their vehicles, weapons and other equipment to ensure they'll work in extreme cold weather and there's no reason the same preparation cannot be done at home.

Everyone in the Army family needs to plan and do what's right this winter. Prior planning is the cornerstone to preventing costly home repairs and possible injuries or even death.

Key Messages:

- Cold weather is on the horizon – prepare your home now.
- Don't get complacent in the comfort of your home this winter.
- Soldiers and their families should remain vigilant because freezing temperatures bring with them dangerous risks.

Talking points:

- Not overestimating the weather and preparing beforehand are just a few of the ways to ensure the safety of you and your loved ones this winter.
- Dubbed the silent killer, carbon monoxide is odorless, colorless, tasteless and deadly. Everyone is at risk for carbon monoxide poisoning.

- For individuals planning to use a generator in the event of a power outage, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission cautions against using them inside homes or garages, even if doors and windows are open. Carbon monoxide from a generator can kill an individual within minutes.
- Freezing pipes can plague homeowners when temperatures plummet. Knowing where the water main is located, insulating exposed plumbing pipes and draining water hoses before the onset of cold weather are measures individuals can take in an effort to prevent frozen and bursting pipes.

Tips:

In the comfort of a home, it's easy to get complacent and not plan for weather-related emergencies. During wintertime, storms and freezing temperatures can be dangerous. Soldiers and their families should be vigilant. Here are some tips (courtesy of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) that could help you avert disaster this winter:

- Winterize your home
 - Install weather stripping, insulation, and storm windows
 - Insulate water lines that run along exterior walls
 - Clean out gutters and repair roof leaks
- Check your heating systems
 - Have your heating system serviced professionally to make sure that it's clean, working properly and ventilated to the outside
 - Inspect and clean fireplaces and chimneys
 - Install a smoke detector and test it's batteries monthly
 - Have a safe alternative heating source and alternate fuels available
 - Prevent carbon monoxide emergencies
 - Install a carbon monoxide detector to alert you of the presence of deadly, odorless, colorless gas
 - Learn the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning: headaches, nausea and disorientation
 - Keep grills and generators out of the house and garage
 - Be prepared for weather-related emergencies, including power outages
 - Stock food that needs no cooking or refrigeration and keep water stored in clean containers
 - Keep an up-to-date emergency kit, including:
 - Battery-operated devices, such as a flashlight, a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration weather radio and lamps
 - Extra batteries
 - First-aid kit and extra medicine
 - Baby items
 - Cat litter or sand for icy walk ways

Historical Reference:

<https://safety.army.mil/>

<http://www.usfa.fema.gov/citizens/co/index.shtm>

<http://www.cdc.gov/Features/WinterWeather/>

Statistics:

- According to the U.S. Fire Administration, each year in America, more than 150 people die from accidental non-fire related carbon monoxide poisoning associated with consumer products. These products include faulty, improperly used or incorrectly, vented, fuel-burning appliances such as furnaces, stoves, water heaters and fire places. One generator produces as much carbon monoxide as hundreds of cars.
- The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reports carbon monoxide from a generator can kill an individual within minutes.

Follow us on:

