



# KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

In the Pursuit of Extraordinary Governance...

**NEWS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Be Prepared for Extreme Winter Weather**

KALAMAZOO, MI— With the arrival of frigid temperatures, the Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department is reminding residents that planning and preparation are your best defenses for staying healthy and safe during extreme winter weather.

Exposure to cold temperature and increased wind speeds can cause your body to lose heat faster than it can generate it. Prolonged exposure to cold eventually uses the body's stored energy and can result in serious health injuries such as hypothermia and frostbite.

"Residents should take the necessary precautions to prevent health issues caused by exposure to cold weather," said Jim Rutherford, Health Officer for Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department. Rutherford continued, "We encourage residents to have a plan in case of an extreme winter weather emergency. Be aware of the weather forecasts, stay indoors if possible, dress appropriately for the weather, be cautious when walking or driving in winter conditions, and keep an emergency kit in your car."

Residents are encouraged to follow these tips in order to stay healthy and safe during extreme cold weather:

- Try to stay indoors when weather is extremely cold, especially if winds are high or the temperature is below freezing. If you must go outdoors, make trips outside as brief as possible.
- When going outside, no skin should be exposed. Adults and children should wear a hat, scarf or knit mask to cover face and mouth, sleeves that are snug at the wrist, insulated and waterproof mittens or gloves, several layers of loose-fitting, thermal wear or material that "wicks" moisture off the skin, a water-resistant or tightly woven coat, and two layers of socks with boots or shoes that are waterproof and have a flexible sole.

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**HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

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- Keep your steps and walkways free of ice as possible by using rock salt or another chemical de-icing compound. Sand or even cat litter may also be used on walkways to reduce the risk of slipping.
- Make sure you have a [car emergency kit](#) with you.

Taking preventive action is your best defense against having to deal with extreme cold-weather conditions. By preparing in advance for winter emergencies, and by observing safety precautions during times of extremely cold weather, you can reduce the risk of weather-related health problems.

As appropriate, HCS will continue to issue additional news releases with details regarding the steps the public can take to guide their health and safety as the temperature continues to drop and weather conditions change through the winter season.

The Kalamazoo County Office of Emergency Management issues winter weather advisories via Facebook at; <https://www.facebook.com/KalamazooCoOEM/>. For more information on preparing for severe weather, the Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department encourages residents to visit: [https://www.kalcounty.com/em/pdf\\_files/Severe%20Weather.pdf](https://www.kalcounty.com/em/pdf_files/Severe%20Weather.pdf)

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