



## *Commonwealth of Virginia*

### *Office of Governor Terry McAuliffe*

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Virginia Residents Should Be Ready for Winter Storm**

Richmond, Va. – With the first major snow storm of the winter season affecting most of Virginia today, residents are reminded to take safety precautions and to avoid unnecessary travel.

“I urge every Virginian to make proper preparations as this storm moves in and brings snow, potentially life-threatening low temperatures and high winds,” said Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe. “Unfortunately, injuries and even deaths from hypothermia, heart attack, stroke and traffic crashes are all too common during the winter storms of this type. Don’t travel unnecessarily, and be prepared to stay where you are until conditions improve.”

Important winter safety tips include:

- Keep space heaters at least three feet from other objects. Never leave space heaters unattended.
- In case of power outages, use flashlights instead of candles for light.
- Charge mobile devices.
- Use generators only outdoors and only in well ventilated areas. Follow manufacturer’s instructions exactly.
- Bring pets inside, and make sure outdoor animals have adequate shelter, unfrozen water and food.
- Driving is most dangerous when the temperature is at or under 32° F. If the road is wet, patches of ice are possible, especially on bridges and curves. Avoid using cruise control in winter weather conditions.
- Keep a safe distance of at least five seconds behind other vehicles and snowplows. Don’t pass a snowplow or spreader.

- Motorists who must travel should check current weather, road conditions and traffic cameras before traveling at [www.511Virginia.org](http://www.511Virginia.org) or by calling 511 or using the free 511 mobile app.
- If your household includes someone with special needs (has a disability, requires electricity to operate home medical equipment, needs to go to dialysis, etc.), call your local emergency manager to let them know where you live and what you will need during an emergency.

Drivers should keep an emergency winter kit in vehicles. Include bottles of water and granola bars or other non-perishable food; bags of sand or cat litter to provide traction under tires; hats, gloves and blankets; and cell phone chargers.

Prepare at home with emergency supplies that include three days' food and water; a battery-powered and/or hand-crank radio with extra batteries to hear local information if the power is out; a first aid kit and necessary medications; blankets and warm clothing, supplies for special members of your household, and pet items.

Before, during and after a winter storm, listen for up-to-date information from local media and emergency officials. Local media will give instructions from local, state and federal agencies that cover road conditions, winter storm watches and warnings, power outages and health information.

For more on preparing for winter weather in Virginia, visit [www.ReadyVirginia.gov](http://www.ReadyVirginia.gov).

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