



STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS
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DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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WISCONSIN'S WINTER AWARENESS WEEK
NOVEMBER 8-12, 2010

(MADISON) Governor Jim Doyle has declared November 8-12, 2010 as Wisconsin's Winter Awareness Week. The annual campaign, sponsored by Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) and NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS), is to remind people to be prepared for winter conditions that could threaten their safety.

This year, NASCAR driver Matt Kenseth is teaming up with WEM to promote winter awareness. Matt is appearing in a number of public service announcements that will air on Wisconsin TV stations and some radio stations statewide during the month of November.

Winter storms are considered deceptive killers because most deaths are indirectly related to the storm. Examples of such deaths include traffic accidents on icy or snow-covered roads, prolonged exposure to the cold and indoor carbon monoxide poisoning. It is important to start taking preventive measures for winter weather. Now is the time to winterize your car and home, gather items for a disaster kit, and make sure you have a NOAA Weather Radio or a commercial radio with fresh batteries.

Additional winter weather tips and notes on how to put together a disaster kit are available at the ReadyWisconsin website. In addition, there are numerous winter storm maps and historical details of Wisconsin's winter weather produced by the National Weather Service. For more information, visit ReadyWisconsin at <http://ReadyWisconsin.wi.gov>.

For more information on the winter weather awareness campaign, contact your county emergency management director or your local NWS office.

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Winter Driving in Wisconsin

Winter Facts

- Typically there are around 25,000 motor vehicle crashes in Wisconsin during winter months when roads are covered with ice, snow or slush.
- On average in Wisconsin, over 70 people are killed and 7,500 people are injured each winter season in accidents when roads are covered in ice, snow or slush.
- Many crashes are caused by “driving too fast for current conditions.” Also, when the first blast of winter arrives, motorists often need to “re-learn” how to drive in slippery conditions.
- Heavy rains and melted snow in late winter or early spring can result in flooded roads. *Turn Around—Don’t Drown™!*



(Turn Around Don't Drown™ is a NOAA National Weather Service campaign to warn people of the hazards of walking or driving a vehicle through flood waters)

Kenseth Promotes Winter Awareness Campaign

NASCAR champion and Wisconsin native Matt Kenseth is encouraging winter weather emergency preparedness.

Kenseth will be featured in a series of television and radio public service announcements in November urging Wisconsin drivers to carry an emergency winter survival kit in their vehicles. Kenseth will direct viewers and listeners to the ReadyWisconsin website, <http://readywisconsin.wi.gov> for information on how to make an emergency kit and how to register to win a free kit.

The campaign will air on TV and radio stations across the state from November 1-24, 2010. Radio spots will also air during the Badger football and hockey games in November.

ReadyWisconsin is part of Wisconsin Emergency Management with a mission to prepare individuals, families and businesses for emergencies and disasters.

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Winter Driving

Plan your travels and check the latest weather reports to avoid a winter storm. You can find out the latest road conditions by visiting the Wisconsin Department of Transportation travel information website at www.511wi.gov or by calling 511.

It is also important to check and winterize your vehicles before the winter season begins. Keep your gas tank near full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines. Make sure your car's battery is in good shape – cold temperatures can reduce the effectiveness of a battery by 50 percent.

If expecting adverse weather during your trip, tell someone at both ends of your journey where you are going and the route you intend to take. Report your safe arrival. Make certain that both parties have your cell phone number and license plate number before you start your trip.

Be gentle with both the accelerator and brake. If the rear of your car begins to slide on snow or ice, turn into the direction of the skid. Expect a second skid as the car straightens out, and be prepared to counter this sliding action.

Carry a winter storm survival kit in the back seat of your vehicle (in case your trunk jams or is frozen shut) that includes:

- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- First-aid kit
- Shovel, tools, booster cables and windshield scraper
- High-calorie non-perishable food (raisins, candy bars, energy/protein bars, etc.)
- Sand or cat litter to use for traction
- Cell phone adapter

Official snowfall records

- Greatest daily total - Neillsville, 26.0 inches of snow on Dec. 27, 1904.
- Greatest single storm total - Superior, 31.0 inches over Oct. 31-Nov. 2, 1991.
- Greatest monthly total - Hurley, 103.5 inches in Jan. 1997.
- Greatest seasonal total - Hurley, 301.8 inches in winter of 1996-97.
- Deepest snow on ground (excluding drifts) - Hurley, 60.0 inches on Jan. 30, 1996.

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Safety First - Stay Informed

The National Weather Service (NWS) issues winter storm warnings and watches. Here's what they mean and what you should do.

Winter Storm Watch – Winter storm conditions (heavy snow, sleet and freezing rain) are possible within the next 36-48 hours. Continue monitoring the weather forecast.

Winter Storm or Ice Storm Warning – A significant winter event is occurring or will begin in the next 24 hours. The combination of snow, sleet, freezing rain and moderate winds will impact travel and outdoor activities. An Ice Storm Warning is issued when mostly freezing rain is expected with ice accumulations of ¼ inch or more within a 12-hour period. Take necessary precautions – consider canceling travel plans.



Blizzard Warning – A dangerous event with winds that are 35 mph or greater in combination with falling and/or blowing snow that reduces visibility to 1/4 mile or less for a duration of at least 3 hours.

What is possible? Residents can expect almost anything, ranging from killer dense fog and flooding rains to widespread heavy snows and blizzards that can isolate a village/city for days. The only month without a tornado in Wisconsin's history is February! Be ready!

Wisconsin Winter Weather Facts – National Weather Service

- The coldest temperature in the winter of 2009-10 was -31° Fahrenheit (F) at Couderay 7W (Sawyer Co.) on January 2, 2010.
- The Hurley, WI–Ironwood, MI, area in Iron County had the most snow of 166.9 inches in the winter of 2009-10, while Spring Valley in Pierce County had the least with only 11.5 inches. Most of the southeast half of Wisconsin had 35 to 55 inches of snow.
- Wisconsin's all-time, lowest temperature is -55°F on February 2 & 4, 1996, near Couderay (Sawyer Co.). Readings of -30°F or colder have been recorded in every month from November through April. Of course, brief readings in the 50's, 60's and 70's are possible during winter as well!
- Average annual snowfall ranges from 35 to 40 inches near the Illinois border to 135 to 165 inches in the Iron County snow-belt from Gurney to Hurley.

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Keep Warm and Safe

Frostbite is damage to body tissue caused by extreme cold. A wind chill around -20°F could cause frostbite in just 15 minutes or less. Frostbite causes a loss of feeling and a white or pale appearance in extremities such as fingers, toes, ear tips or the tip of the nose. If symptoms are detected, seek medical care immediately!

Hypothermia is a condition that develops when the body temperature drops below 95°F . It is very deadly. Warning signs include uncontrollable shivering, disorientation, slurred speech and drowsiness. Seek medical care immediately!

Overexertion is dangerous. Cold weather puts an added strain on the heart. Unaccustomed exercise such as shoveling snow or pushing a car can bring on a heart attack or make an existing medical condition worse.

Pets also need extra care when the temperatures fall. They should be brought inside when the temperature reaches 30°F with wind chill. Dogs and cats can get frost bitten ears, nose and feet if left outside during bitter cold weather. Chemicals used to melt snow and ice can also irritate pets' paws - be sure to keep anti-freeze, salt and other poisons away from pets.

Be Prepared

Some of the dangers associated with winter storms include loss of heat, power and telephone service and a shortage of supplies. To help protect your family, now is the time to put together a disaster supply kit. Here are some items to include:

- Flashlights and extra batteries
- Battery-powered NOAA Weather Radio and a commercial radio
- Bottled water and non-perishable food that requires no cooking
- First-aid supplies
- Fire extinguisher, smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector
- If appropriate, extra medications and baby items
- If you have an emergency heating source such as a fireplace or space heater, make sure you have proper ventilation
- Make sure pets have shelter and plenty of food and water

For additional information, contact your county emergency management office, the National Weather Service or ReadyWisconsin. Tips on winter safety, developing your own personal preparedness plan and building an emergency kit can also be found at the following websites:

www.weather.gov
<http://readywisconsin.wi.gov>

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