

# 2010-11 Wisconsin Winter Facts

## Groundhog Day Blizzard

It is important for all of us to prepare for the power of winter storms. Few of us will forget the Groundhog Day Blizzard of 2011.

Between January 31 and February 2, parts of the state had snowfall totals between 12 and 33 inches with wind gusts between 40 and 65 miles an hour. Schools and businesses closed and thousands heeded the warning to stay home in the near-paralyzing event.



## Here are some more winter facts:

- Greatest daily total – 26 inches of snow at Pell Lake in Walworth County on Feb. 2, 2011.
- The coldest temperature was -37° Fahrenheit (F) at Ladysmith 3SW (Rusk Co.) on January 22, 2011.
- The Hurley, WI–Ironwood, MI, area in Iron County had the most snow of 167 inches in the winter of 2010-11, while Waunakee in Dane County had the least with only 37.2 inches. Most of the northern two-thirds of the state had 60 to 95 inches, while the southern third had 40 to 60 inches. The 92.6" in Green Bay during the '10-'11 winter was the highest amount in modern-day history. Only the winters of 1889-90 and 1887-88 had more snow.

# Kenseth Promotes Winter Awareness Campaign



NASCAR champion and Cambridge, Wisconsin native Matt Kenseth is teaming up with Wisconsin Emergency Management's ReadyWisconsin program to promote winter weather emergency preparedness.

Kenseth will be featured in a series of television and radio public service announcements urging Wisconsin drivers to carry an emergency winter survival kit in their vehicles. Kenseth will also direct viewers and listeners to the ReadyWisconsin website, [readywisconsin.wi.gov](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 across the state beginning October 31, 2011 and continue through November.

"This is the second year Matt is helping to spread this important safety message to Wisconsin," said Tod Pritchard, Wisconsin Emergency Preparedness Coordinator. "Now is the time to get your vehicles ready for winter weather. Just a few simple steps like having an emergency kit in your car could save your life in case you are stranded in your vehicle."

Matt Kenseth was born in Cambridge in 1972. He is one of only five drivers in NASCAR history to win a Cup Championship, the Raybestos Rookie Award and the Daytona 500. Kenseth is currently in the 2011 NASCAR Chase for the Sprint Cup "playoff." This marks the seventh time in eight seasons of the Chase that Kenseth has qualified for the field. For more about Matt, visit his official website: [www.mattkenseth.com](http://www.mattkenseth.com)

Matt remains a major force in his hometown with the Matt Kenseth Museum and Fan Club headquarters in Cambridge and his support of many Wisconsin charities and non-profit organizations.



# Winter Driving In Wisconsin

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](http://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 at least half 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
- Extra hats, socks and mittens
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- First-aid kit
- Shovel, booster cables and windshield scraper
- Water and high-calorie non-perishable food (raisins, candy bars, energy/protein bars)
- Sand or cat litter to use for traction
- Cell phone adapter



- In the last five years Wisconsin has averaged 20,000 motor vehicle crashes during the winter months when roads are covered with ice, snow or slush.
- On average, 60 people are killed and 6,000 injured in Wisconsin each winter season in accidents when roads are covered in ice, snow and 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.

# 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.

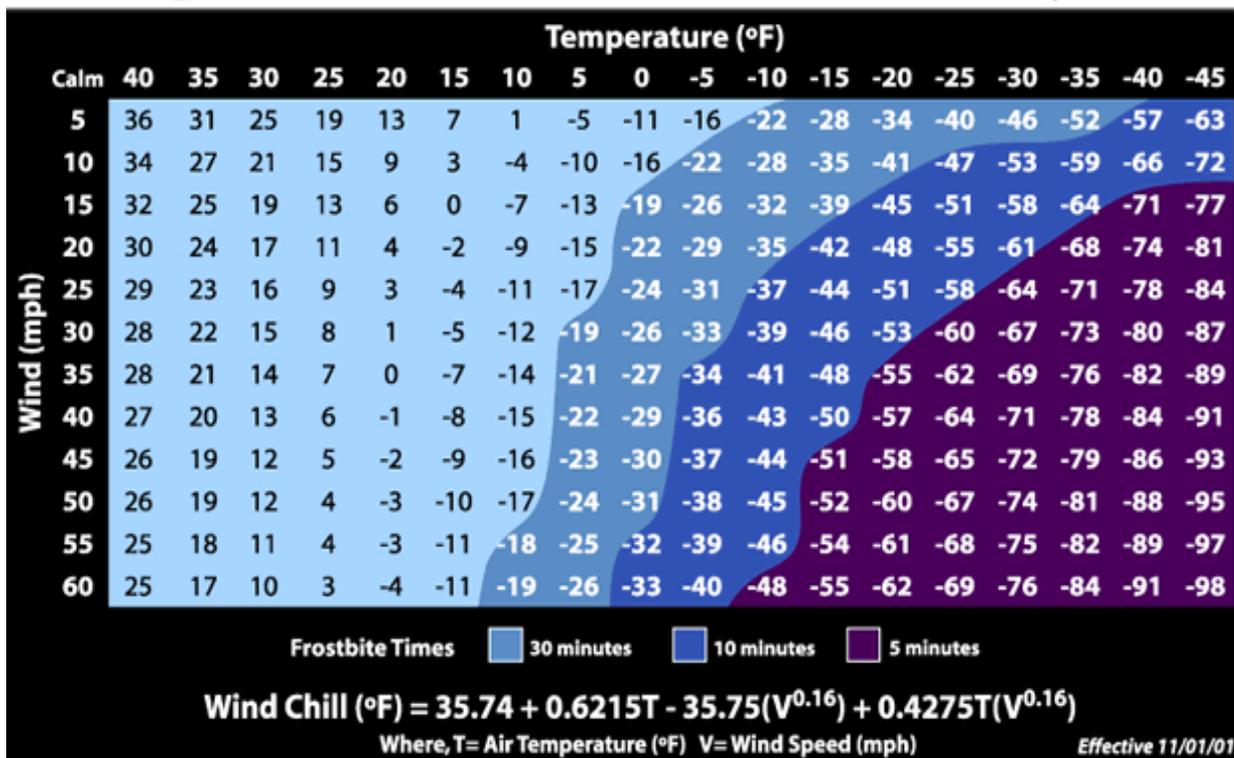
**Blizzard Warning** – A dangerous event with winds that are 35 mph or greater in combination with falling and/or blowing snow that reduces visibility to 1/4 mile or less for a duration of at least 3 hours.

**Wind Chill Advisory** – Issued for wind chills between -20 and -34 combined with winds for three hours or more.

**Wind Chill Warning** – Issued for wind chills below -35 or colder combined with winds for three hours or more.



## NWS Windchill Chart



## Wisconsin Winter Weather Facts – *National Weather Service*

- 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.
- 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.

### 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 At Home

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 or tribal 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://www.weather.gov)  
[readywisconsin.wi.gov](http://readywisconsin.wi.gov)

**Follow us on Facebook:**

[www.facebook.com/readywisconsin](http://www.facebook.com/readywisconsin)

**Follow us on Twitter:**

[www.twitter.com/readywisconsin](http://www.twitter.com/readywisconsin)

