



Joint Release

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DANGEROUS WINTER STORM

SPOKANE Co., WA – Spokane’s County’s relatively mild winter is turning dangerous and could pose a threat to people and pets’ health or even their lives.

Andy Brown, Warning Coordination Meteorologist at National Weather Service reports:

A potent winter storm is impacting the northwest US Friday and Saturday bringing widespread snow and much colder temperatures next week.

- 6-8" of Snow for Spokane Metro Friday morning through Saturday morning
- 3-6" of Additional Snow for Spokane Metro Sunday
- Turning Colder Monday with single-digit wind chills
- Very cold Tuesday and Wednesday
 - Lows 5F to -5F. Highs around 10 degrees.
 - Potential for Lows -10 to -20F with Highs around 0.
- Thursday - Saturday - continued cold with snow.
 - Highs around 20 degrees.
 - Lows around 10 degrees.

Exposure to Cold Temperatures Increases Risk for Serious or Life-Threatening Health Problems

With low temperatures in the Spokane region expected to be in the single digits over the next several days and winter weather advisory for significant and blowing snow in effect Friday night into Saturday night, [Spokane Regional Health District](#) (SRHD) is issuing this health advisory. Exposure to cold temperatures can cause serious or life-threatening health problems. Infants and the elderly are particularly at risk, but anyone, including animals, can be affected.

"When the weather is extremely cold, and especially if there is blowing snow, try to stay indoors," said Dr. Bob Lutz, health officer for SRHD. "To avoid hypothermia and frostbite, make any trips outside as brief as possible, and remember that by preparing for winter emergencies, the risks of weather-related health problems can be reduced."

Extreme cold presents a dangerous situation that can result in health emergencies in susceptible people, such as those without shelter or who are stranded, or who live in a home that is poorly insulated or without heat. City of Spokane offers a list of provider services and additional night warming centers on its [site here](#).

Preparing for extreme cold

- Stock up on emergency supplies for communication, food, safety, heating and car. Check out these [winter weather checklists](#) from ready.gov.
- Listen to the radio or television, or follow social media channels, for winter storm forecasts and other information.
- Have appropriate cold weather clothing available.
- Make sure fireplace functions properly.
- Fill your vehicle's gas tank.

During periods of extreme cold

When residents must use space heaters and fireplaces to stay warm, the risk of household fires increases, as well as the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. Use fireplaces, wood stoves, or other combustion heaters only if they are properly vented to the outside and never use a charcoal or gas grill indoors—the fumes are deadly.

Here are other tips to keep residents safe during extreme cold temperatures:

- If an individual must go outdoors, wear several layers of loose fitting, light weight, warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing. Wear mittens rather than gloves. Wear a hat. Cover mouth with a scarf to protect lungs from extremely cold air.
- Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia:
 - Signs of frostbite include a white or grayish-yellow skin area, skin that feels unusually firm or waxy, or numbness.
 - Signs of hypothermia include slurred speech, disorientation, uncontrollable shivering, stumbling, drowsiness and body temperature of 95 degrees Fahrenheit or less.
- If a resident becomes trapped outside, get out of the wind and stay dry. Build a lean-to or snow cave if nothing else is available. Do not eat snow; it will make you too cold.
- Do not drive unnecessarily.

Greater Spokane Emergency Management would like to remind Spokane County residents to be prepared for this life-threatening weather, during the worst of the snow storm we encourage you to stay home and only travel if necessary. Spokane County can expect reduced visibility due to snowy conditions. Please drive with caution, slow down, give yourself plenty of room between you and the car in front, and carry cold weather supplies in your vehicle such as blankets, food, and ensure your cell phone is fully charged. Dangerously cold temperatures will enter the region early next week. You can find tips on preparedness at www.GSEM.US and don't forget to monitor weather conditions on TV and at the National Weather Service for up to date information. Finally, please register with www.ALERTSpokane.org to receive alerts that may affect your home or neighborhood during an emergency.

Spokane Regional Animal Protection Service (SCRAPS) reminds all pet owners to keep your pets inside. If you let them out for any reason, wait and let them back in right away. Pets are not equipped for this brutal cold weather and can suffer serious health issues or death if exposed to the severe cold we are expecting this weekend and into next week. If you have concerns for the safety of an animal that should be indoors, please contact SCRAPS so they may investigate the situation at: (509) 477-2532. After normal business hours, you may still report the issue at this number. For more information please visit: <https://www.spokanecounty.org/567/SCRAPS---Regional-Animal-Protection>

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