

VERMONT EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEWS ADVISORY

Date:	1/2/10	Contact:	Mark Bosma, Public Information Officer Vermont Emergency Management (800) 347-0488
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VEM Urges Caution as Snow Falls

WATERBURY, VT - The National Weather Service has issued a Winter Storm Warning for northern areas of Vermont from Saturday into Monday morning. Forecasters say as much as 12-18 inches could fall during this period. Winds gusts of up to 35 mph are also expected to create deeper snowdrifts. Lesser, but significant amounts are also expected in the southern part of the state.

These conditions could cause power outages and make driving conditions hazardous. Vermont Emergency Management urges residents to prepare for the storm and use caution during this and other snow events.

- If while traveling you get stuck in deep snow, do NOT let your engine idle if your exhaust pipe is buried. Idling with a buried exhaust pipe also risks carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Other tips for the road
 - Check road and weather conditions before leaving; visit www.511vt.com or call 511 for this information.
 - Avoid traveling unless necessary and always allow yourself extra time to get to your destination.
 - Make sure your vehicle is in good mechanical condition with snow tires and winter windshield wiper blades.
 - Watch for and expect changing road conditions, black ice, blowing snow, high winds or whiteout conditions can appear when you least expect them to.
 - The single most important rule is to drive at a speed that matches the prevailing visibility, traffic and road conditions. The posted speed limits are for dry, clear conditions only.
 - Be sure to leave yourself plenty of extra room, extend the following distance from other vehicles ahead.
- Residents should use caution when digging out from any snow storm. Excessive snow shoveling can cause a range of health problems, from back injuries to heart attack, if not done in moderation. Take frequent breaks from shoveling.
- Check snow pack on roofs and remove snow if necessary and if it can be done safely to avoid a possible collapse.
- Vermonters who are able to help elderly neighbors and others who need assistance in removing snow are encouraged to do so.
- The elderly and those with special needs should contact their local power company and local community officials prior to the storm to alert them of those needs in the event of a power outage.
- As always, it is advisable to have an emergency preparedness kit on hand with some or all of the following items:
 - Flashlights and batteries in your home and car;
 - A battery-powered radio or NOAA weather radio to listen for advisories;
 - Bottled water; 1 gallon per person, per day is advised;
- If snow piles up ensure all outside heating vents are clear of snow. A blocked vent can lead to carbon monoxide (CO) buildup in the home and CO poisoning. Initial symptoms of CO poisoning are similar to flu, but without the fever and may include headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea, and dizziness. If you suspect that you are experiencing CO poisoning, get fresh air immediately and

call your local fire department for assistance from a safe location. It is advisable to have CO detectors on all levels of your home.

- If power is lost and you run a generator, it is important that the generator is outdoors; an improperly operated generator can lead to CO poisoning; check your owner's manual before operating a generator.
- Also ensure your generator is installed according to manufacturers' standards; an improperly installed generator can feed back onto power lines, creating a hazard to line workers.

For road conditions call 511 or visit 511vt.com. For personal assistance, like shelter or other information, call 211.

Any towns that may need assistance during the storm are encouraged to call Vermont Emergency Management at 800-347-0488.

For more information, the media can call Vermont Emergency Management at 800-347-0488.