

FEMA Launches First-Ever #WinterReady Campaign, Urges the Nation to Get Prepared for Extreme Cold and Winter Weather

Release Date: November 16, 2023

WASHINGTON -- In time for holiday travel and winter weather, FEMA's Ready Campaign launched the first-ever [#WinterReady](#) campaign encouraging people to identify and reduce the risks they face during the winter season. FEMA's #WinterReady Campaign provides easy, low-cost tips to keep you safe including ways to keep homes warm, travel safely, prepare for inclement weather and simple steps to mitigate the risks of home fires which are most prevalent during this time.

"Harsh winters are not only a concern for states in the far north -- blizzards, extreme cold and the damage to our critical infrastructure that these conditions can cause today threaten every community, everywhere across our nation," **said Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas**. "An ounce of prevention today is worth a pound of cure tomorrow. The #WinterReady Campaign, thanks to the Biden-Harris Administration's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, will make resources available to help our entire country stand more resilient, more secure, and more prepared in the face of the cold months ahead. I strongly urge every community to take advantage of these resources -- including and especially those who have not faced these weather-related challenges before."

Winter weather brings risks that can be avoided with appropriate preparation. According to the CDC's [National Center for Health Statistics](#), more temperature-related deaths are attributable to cold exposure than heat, and Americans in rural communities are most likely to be impacted. One of the most important risks to mitigate are [fires caused by home portable heaters](#), which remain the second leading cause of home fires in the United States, according to the U.S. Fire Administration.



FEMA

Page 1 of 3

“In the last few years, we have seen Texas freeze and the 2022 blizzard that left hundreds of thousands of Massachusetts residents without power,” said **FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell**. “No matter where you are in the nation, it is important to know how to handle cold temperatures, power outages, and home heating technology in ways that keep you and your family safe. I want everyone to be #WinterReady and then encourage your friends, family and neighbors to make a plan, too. The steps we take now to prepare and educate people ahead of the winter season can end up saving lives.”

“At USFA, we want everyone to be #WinterReady and fire safe,” said USFA Administrator Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell. “Every year, the number of fires and fire related injuries increase during the winter season. These increases are largely due to heating insecurity, inattentive cooking and holiday decoration fires. Cold temperatures lead to the use of fireplaces or space heaters. These heat sources can keep us warm and can also be dangerous if not used safely. Please keep blankets and anything that can burn at least 3 feet away from heat sources.”

Communities across the nation experience severe winter weather in different ways, face unique risks, and have varying levels of infrastructure or experience to handle extreme weather events. Increases in anomalous winter weather in the South and more frequent winter storms, including lake-effect snowstorms in the Northeast, are increasing vulnerabilities for these communities. The #WinterReady tools and resources can help keep them safe.

With investment support from the Biden-Harris Administration’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, FEMA offers [hazard mitigation grants](#) through the Building Resilience Infrastructure and Communities and Flood Mitigation Assistance programs. During the winter months, [webinars](#) will be offered to those who are interested in applying for these grant opportunities, which support building community resilience for extreme temperatures and even flooding from snow melt, making communities more resilient to climate change driven extreme weather events.

With the holiday season upon us, USFA has one last #WinterReady reminder. “Holidays bring celebrating and cooking for family and friends, which can lead to being distracted to food on the stove. Stay Alert!” said Administrator Moore-Merrell. “Decorations are beautiful, but please check the cords of your holiday lights for cracks or frays and never leave a burning candle unattended. If using a live tree, keep it watered. A dry tree burns faster in event of fire. We wish you a



fire safe, #WinterReady season!"

