

# FEMA's #WinterReady Preparedness Initiative Delivers on Promise to Build Local Capacity to Stay Safe from Extreme Cold

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**To address the unique risks and specific needs people may face during winter, FEMA's Ready Campaign launched its first-ever #WinterReady initiative preparing individuals, households and communities with extreme cold safety**

WASHINGTON -- With spring around the corner, FEMA is officially closing out the first-ever #WinterReady campaign. FEMA's Ready campaign launched the #WinterReady initiative in November 2023 to prepare individuals and communities for winter weather hazards. #WinterReady offered simple, accessible and culturally competent resources on preventing and mitigating risks exacerbated by winter weather conditions, including travel, fire and cold weather safety tips. From how to build a car emergency kit to how to protect pipes from freezing in extreme temperatures, this first ever #WinterReady campaign took a whole-community approach to encouraging individual and household preparedness.

"Extreme cold is a potential threat to the safety and security of every American, everywhere -- one that demands the same urgency, collaboration and commitment that government has brought to extreme weather events like hurricanes, heat waves and other events exacerbated by climate change," said Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkasin in his address to the #WinterReady Extreme Cold Summit. "That is why we at the Department of Homeland Security and FEMA launched the #WinterReady public safety awareness campaign. The DHS workforce and our partners across the Biden-Harris Administration will continue to be there not only in your community's moments of need, but well before then, too, as we work together to prevent grave harm from ever occurring."



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“Launching the #WinterReady initiative is part of FEMA’s commitment to creating a climate resilient nation,” said FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell. “Preparing for extreme temperatures is especially crucial to protecting our most vulnerable populations -- older adults, those with disabilities and people who need low-cost ways to keep themselves and their loved ones safe. Over the last three months, we worked hand-in-hand with our partners providing lifesaving information that encouraged households across the country to be winter ready.”

## Launching Inaugural #WinterReady Campaign on Ready.gov

- In November, FEMA’s Ready campaign kicked off the #WinterReady campaign by launching the first [#WinterReady webpage](#). The page includes easy, low-cost tips on ways to keep homes warm, travel safely, prepare for inclement weather and lessen the risks of home fires. It addresses specific needs of older adults, those who spend time working or playing outside and those who live somewhere that doesn’t usually see extreme winter weather. Over the last three months, the page has been viewed more than 53,300 times.
- As a companion to the webpage, Ready produced a [#WinterReady Partner Toolkit](#), and asked partners to share the messaging, graphics and resources created to educate the public on the risks of winter weather, promote fire safety and urge caution when travelling in winter weather.
- Ahead of the winter season, FEMA’s Ready Campaign teamed up with the National Football League Buffalo Bills to create [Public Service Announcements \(PSAs\) encouraging football fans to prepare](#) for disasters. In the [first PSA, filmed at the Buffalo Bills' Highmark Stadium](#) in Buffalo, New York, Administrator Criswell and the team’s mascot, Billy Buffalo, encourage people to know your risks, make a plan with friends and family and build an emergency supply kit. The [PSAs](#) acknowledge that disasters can happen any time, so preparedness starts today.

## Building Local Capacity to Make a More Resilient #WinterReady Nation

- In January 2024, more than 500 people attended FEMA’s Individual and Community Preparedness Division #WinterReady webinar featuring Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) subject matter experts. The discussion included best practices, lessons learned and tips to prepare communities for extreme cold.



- [DHS and FEMA hosted a #WinterReady Extreme Cold Summit](#) that highlighted ways the federal government supports its partners as they address extreme temperatures and promoted individual and community climate resilience. The summit, led by Secretary Mayorkas and Administrator Criswell, brought together federal, state, local and Tribal Nation leaders to highlight best practices and resources across all levels of government to keep communities safe and prepared.

## **U.S. Fire Administration Urges #WinterReady Preparedness, Campaigns for Fire Safety Across Midwest**

- Because home fire dangers increase during winter months, U.S. Fire Administration Administrator Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell and FEMA Region 5 Regional Administrator Tom Sivak [joined forces with fire service leaders](#) to speak about the risks of fire and how the public can be fire-safe and #WinterReady. The tour included stops in Detroit, Michigan, [Chicago, Illinois](#) and [Columbus, Ohio](#). The tour was an opportunity to urge communities and individuals of things they could do to make themselves safer and savable.
- FEMA's [Before, During and After](#) podcast Feb. 8 episode on [#WinterReady - Being Fire Safe in the Winter Can Help Save Lives](#), featured Administrator Moore-Merrell and FEMA's Associate Administrator of the Office of External Affairs Justin Ángel Knighten discussing increased danger from home fires in the winter, and how to educate the public on ways to protect themselves. It also outlined how to reach all communities with simple, accessible and culturally competent messaging that encourages individual preparedness.

## **Reaching New Audiences, FEMA Promotes #WinterReady Across FEMA's Online Platforms**

- In December 2023, FEMA Region 3 hosted a family friendly "[A Partridge and a Prepared Me](#)" webinar, urging individuals and communities to prioritize holiday decorating and home fire safety tips, winter weather safety and preparedness.
- In the past few years, communities in FEMA Region 6 experienced deadly and disruptive periods of extreme winter weather. To urge individuals, especially older adults and those with disabilities, to protect themselves, the region formed partnerships with local broadcast and print media to promote #WinterReady tips. To date, more than 60 articles and interviews have been published across print, digital and traditional broadcast media outlets, broadening coverage of



these important messages.

- FEMA's [Before, During and After podcast](#) released two #WinterReady podcasts on winter preparedness, the challenges of winter weather extreme cold and home fire safety. The Dec. 14 podcast, [#WinterReady - Winter Preparedness and the Unique Challenges the Cold Can Pose](#), featured a discussion with a Houston, Texas based meteorologist and covered considerations on messaging around winter preparedness to ensure people are prepared for the unique challenges extreme cold can pose.
- FEMA [published eight blog posts](#) featuring engaging and practical tips individuals can use to keep themselves safe. Topics included tips to stay fire safe, winter car safety, safety for older adults and low-cost ways to keep yourself warm.
- In addition to the frequent #WinterReady posts on Ready.gov's social media accounts, FEMA partnered with the Department of Energy to share targeted messaging with tips on low-cost ways to save energy, find heating assistance and keep warm during extreme cold.

To learn more about how individuals, households and communities can prepare for disasters before they happen, visit [Ready.gov](#).

