

# FEMA Tips to Get Ready for Severe Weather

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**Release Date: February 24, 2025**

Winter and early spring storms can bring snow, tornadoes, hail, lightning and flooding. FEMA encourages Tennesseans to keep cell phones on and fully charged with the volume turned up and severe weather alerts enabled. Follow directions from your local and state officials.

If you are planning to travel by car, check your local weather and traffic reports before heading out. Tell others your route and anticipated arrival time. If your roads are not in good shape, consider postponing non-essential travel until the roads are cleared.

When driving in wet conditions, snow or ice, increase your following distance to 5-to-6 seconds, and watch for icy conditions on bridges and overpasses. It takes longer to slow down on icy roads. Make sure you have your auto insurance provider and towing company numbers close at hand.

Power outages can impact communications, transportation, utilities and much more. If experiencing an outage, keep freezers and refrigerators closed. Disconnect appliances and electronics to avoid damage from electrical surges. Prevent house heating fires by keeping anything that can burn at least 3 feet away from all heat sources including fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators, portable heaters and candles.

Always plug a space heater directly into an outlet and make sure its cord isn't damaged. Never use generators indoors. Never use a gas stove or oven to heat your home. Doing so can put you at risk for carbon monoxide poisoning.

If your area is under a thunderstorm warning, go inside. Listen for alerts or warnings, unplug appliances and do not use landline phones. Watch for flash flooding and be sure to look out for downed power poles and lines after the storm is over.

Visit [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) for more severe weather tips and resources.

