

Winter Sheltering-in-Place Safety Tips



If you are snowed in or sheltering in your home due to a power or heating outage during extreme winter weather there's some important things you need to do for your safety:

- **Pay extra attention** to young children, the elderly and vulnerable adults who may have more difficulty maintaining their body heat.
- **Keep your home gas meter clear.** Make sure your gas meter is clear of ice and snow to keep it working well.
- **Keep your pipes from freezing.** If the rest of your house gets too cold you may want to turn on the faucets to a tiny drip to keep water flowing so it is less likely to freeze in the pipes. As long as the rest of the house stays above freezing inside your pipes should be ok.
- **Turn down your heat.** To lessen the load on your heating and electrical systems get by with a slightly cooler inside temperature by turning the heat down just a few degrees. Wear extra layers to stay warm. Consider also closing off a few rooms to concentrate what heat you have into a few areas you'll stay in.
- **Be very careful with candles.** Battery operated lanterns or flashlights when needed are a much safer light choice.
- **If your furnace isn't working:** Call a heating system repair company immediately. Most have 24 hour emergency response but during a cold snap they may have many customers needing help. You want to get on the repair list as quickly as possible.
 - **Crack a Window:** It may seem odd but you may want to crack a window near the room you are staying in. Remaining in the same area, even for life saving warmth, running heaters, and sealing up your home can cause a buildup of deadly carbon monoxide inside. A tiny amount fresh air coming from outside can make a huge difference in keeping you safe without making you colder.
 - **Be very careful with space heaters.** Never use a gas powered heater inside. Electric heaters, if you have electricity may help but can be very dangerous. Keep them away from anything that can catch fire like blankets and furniture, and anyone who may get burned like young children.