

# HOLIDAY/WINTER SAFETY/POWER FAILURES

This is a quarterly informational preparedness blitz; presented by the Sweetwater County UTSE(Unable to Self Evacuate)/Special Needs Committee. The topic for October to December is **Holiday/Winter Safety/Power Failures.**

We'd like to wish you a safe and happy holiday season.

## WHEN DECORATING YOUR HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS REMEMBER:



- Only use artificial trees labeled "fire resistant".
- Purchase fresh live trees.
- Keep trees and other decorations away from heat sources.
- Keep small breakable decorations away from young children and pets.
- Make sure holiday plants are kept away from young children and pets.
- Indoor and outdoor lights should be UL inspected and checked for damages before using. Replace if there any doubts about their safety.
- TURN OFF LIGHTS when you go to bed or leave the house.
- Keep burning candles in sight. Be sure to EXTINGUISH candles before going to bed or leaving the house.
- Use caution near fireplaces, woodstoves or other heat sources. Keep flammables, children and pets away.
- Keep a fire extinguisher nearby.

## ARE YOU READY FOR WINTER STORMS AND EXTREME COLD?

- STAY INFORMED! Listen to weather reports and storm warnings on TV or the local radio station. Be prepared!
- Have a NOAA All Hazards Radio to receive alerts and updated information.
- Have ice melt ready to melt icy walkways. Keep a bucket of sand ready to spread to help with traction.
- Keep snow removal equipment ready for action!
- Keep a sufficient amount of fuel at all times! (oil, gas, wood, etc)
- Winterize your home and car.



- Dress for the weather!
- Keep at least a 3 day supply of food and water in case you cannot leave your home for a few days.
- Know the symptoms of hypothermia and frostbite.
- Drive only if necessary. Take precautions and carry supplies should you get caught in a snowstorm or are off the road. Keep a blanket, first aid kit, water and snacks in the car.

## **POWERFAILURES – To prepare for a power failure:**

- Make an emergency plan.
- Fill plastic containers with water and place them in the refrigerator and freezer if there's room. Leave about an inch of space inside each one, because water expands as it freezes. This chilled or frozen water will help keep food cold during a temporary power outage, by displacing air that can warm up quickly with water or ice that keeps cold for several hours without additional refrigeration.
- Be aware that most medication that requires refrigeration can be kept in a closed refrigerator for several hours without a problem. If unsure, check with your physician or pharmacist.
- Keep your car tank at least half full because gas stations rely on electricity to power their pumps.
- Know where the manual release lever of your electric garage door opener is located and how to operate it. Garage doors can be heavy, so know that you may need help to lift it.
- Keep a key to your house with you if you regularly use the garage as the primary means of entering your home, in case the garage door will not open.

### **People With Disabilities and Other Access and Functional Needs:**

- Use the “Buddy System” and have a friend/neighbor/relative that will check on you and assist you.
- Have an extra battery if you use a motorized wheelchair or scooter. A car battery also can be used with a wheelchair but will not last as long as a wheelchair's deep-cycle battery. If available, have a lightweight manual wheelchair for backup.
- Have a talking or Braille clock or large-print timepiece with extra batteries if you are blind or have a visual disability.
- Consider getting a small portable battery-operated television set if you are deaf or have a hearing loss. Emergency broadcasts may give information in open captioning.

