



Winter Storm Action Plan

Preparation

Winter storm warnings often come several days prior to arrival of the storm; this allows time to check your preparations and buy last minute supplies. However, stores may run out of bottled water, batteries, etc. Have cash available and cars fueled. Power outages may leave ATMs and gasoline pumps inoperable. Lack of power and communication may last for weeks (or months, e.g. Puerto Rico).

Storm Warning

Preparing your home before the storm

Are trees, limbs, etc. a threat to your house? Clear drains and downspouts, fix drainage problems.

Is your house subject to flooding? Free sand bags are available from the town.

Emergency Supplies for at least 72 hrs (see below)

Preparing your family

Evacuation plan, "Go-bag" and with emergency supplies (including personal medications, cell phone, charger, contact list, key documents etc. on thumb drive). Also pet food and supplies and animal evacuation plan.

The storm hits

Immediate hazards

Wind – falling trees, branches

Rain, ice & snow – road hazards

Flooding – Never try to drive through standing water – cars swept away - a major cause of storm related deaths

Keep children away from creeks and large drains – deadly in storms

Downed electrical wires

Mud, land or debris slides

Decision: Evacuation vs. Shelter-in-Place based on assessment of immediate or imminent hazards. Do not hesitate to take action.

Evacuation

Evacuate with "Go-Bag" if there is an immediate or imminent hazard (e.g. structural damage, flood, landslide).

Evacuation route may be blocked – have alternate evacuation routes planned,

Inform your out-of-area contact that you are evacuating and your intended destination.

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Shelter-in-Place

Your home is usually the safest place. Know your neighbors. You, your family and your neighbors are your most important assets.

Emergency supplies: Minimum 72 hr. supply of water, food, personal medications, etc. and emergency supplies (see FEMA list or Red Cross list and pre-assembled packs; supplement with your personal items). Be ready for the long haul.

System failures

Roadways blocked by downed trees, landslides or washed out bridges.

Electricity outage and Communication – Text messaging may be more robust than cellular voice. Walkie-talkies and Ham radios back-up

After the Storm

Often more injuries and deaths occur after the storm is over, often from carbon monoxide poisoning due to use of generators indoors or injuries from debris, chain-saws or heavy equipment.

Your Own Winter Storm Action Plan

Fill this out ahead of time with contact numbers, evacuation routes, where to go, Emergency Supply Kit.

Out-of-State Contact:

Evacuation Routes:

Where to go:

Location of Emergency Supply Kit:

Notes:



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References:

This Winter Storm Action Plan is derived primarily from SMC Alert/Rain Preparation Tips From The City of Burlingame, January 6, 2018.

Sign up for SMC Alerts <http://hsd.smcsheriff.com/smcalert>

Other references focus on winter blizzards, hurricanes or other types of severe weather not usually seen in the San Francisco area. However, often the principles are the same:

- 1. Prepare for scenarios most likely in your area,**
- 2. Know what to do for each likely scenario.**
- 3. Know when to evacuate and when to shelter in place; be prepared for both.**
- 4. Do not hesitate to take action.**

National Weather Service: <http://www.weather.gov>

Get a Weather Alert portable radio (available on line, at electronics stores or at West Marine, REI or Earth Shakes). Look for “Weather Alert Certified” or “Same Tech” NOAA Weather channels also built into marine radios, walkie-talkies, etc.

Ready.gov/be informed: <https://www.ready.gov/be-informed>

With links to more specific action plans for severe weather, power outages, floods, landslides & debris flows,

FEMA Build a 72 hour Emergency Supply Kit <https://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit>

Red Cross 72 hour Go Bag: <http://www.redcross.org/get-help/prepare-for-emergencies/be-red-cross-ready/get-a-kit>

Atmospheric River storms: https://pubs.usgs.gov/of/2010/1312/of2010-1312_text.pdf

Family Emergency Planning Guide, FEMA:

<https://www.ci.northfield.mn.us/DocumentCenter/View/648>

How to Prepare for a Winter Storm (FEMA): https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1408633655071-32caae446efef4ab2f4fccdb55f725c/PrepareAthon_WINTER_STORMS_HTG_FINAL_508.pdf

Emergency Action Plan...Severe Weather (Hurricanes, Winter Storms):

<http://www.redwoodsgroup.com/safety-resources/general-safety-guidance-and-tools/safety-guidance/emergency-action-plan-severe-weather-ymcas/>

Red Cross Winter Storms: <http://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/winter-storm-About>