

TIPS FOR ICE



The West Hills are particularly vulnerable to Ice and Snow as we are at higher elevation, have narrow and sometimes steep streets that may not be plowed for days, and are vulnerable to power outages. Residents of the neighborhood should be prepared for these storms, and as a rule of thumb be prepared to live “off the grid” for one week.

Getting Around

- On foot – consider traction devices for shoes such as Yaktrax or other spike or chain accessories that fit over boots. Mountain biking and golf shoes are also surprisingly effective.
- When walking, lean a bit forward and take small steps. It is safer than walking normally.
- Hiking poles may be helpful.
- By car – consider not driving unless absolutely necessary. If so, chains on all four tires is recommended. Learn how to put them on before winter. Non-clumping kitty litter or gravel can be helpful in extracting a stuck vehicle.

Hazards

- Ice covered trees & limbs will almost certainly fall. If your house appears to be at risk, consider tree trimming in advance of winter. Be aware of falling limbs if out walking.
- Power – the weight of the ice, and/or fallen limbs will likely result in power outages. Be prepared for a week with no power. This has recently happened in some areas of our city. Backup batteries can keep your small devices working. A generator could be very helpful if installed in advance of the storm.
- Downed powerlines can kill. Do not approach.

Staying Warm

- Prepare by gathering warm clothing and sleeping bags.
- If you have gas heat, it is possible to run the furnace fan using a battery or generator. This requires plugging your furnace into an alternate source of power.
- If you have a fireplace, consider keeping a stash of Duraflame logs or equivalent on hand. Gas fireplace inserts that have batteries can provide heat in the absence of power. Have chimneys checked regularly to ensure safe operation when needed.
- Be very careful about carbon monoxide poisoning - monitoring is essential.

Neighborhood Emergency Teams (NETs) are volunteers trained by Portland Bureau of Emergency Management to provide emergency disaster assistance within their own neighborhoods.

To find out how you can become a NET, email southwesthillsnet@gmail.com
or visit www.portlandoregon.gov/pbem/31667

Lighting

- It is useful to have flashlights with extra batteries and/or rechargeable LED lights at hand.
- Consider propane or kerosene lanterns. Be aware of the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Supplies

- The needed materials will not be available during the storm, so consider stocking up before the storm arrives.
- De-icer is useful for walkways and cars. Consider non-clumping cat litter as an alternate.
- Check pet paws if they walk on de-icer as it can be toxic if licked and ingested.

Food and Cooking

- Have a week's worth of food, such as freeze-dried or canned, that can be stored. Consider whether you will have a cooking device, and what type, when making food selections.
- Cooking will depend on your setup. As a general rule, it's very helpful to have a stove and fuel that does not depend on your kitchen. However, natural gas is not likely to fail in an ice storm. Carbon monoxide is a real concern, so ensure that all cooking spaces are well ventilated.

TIPS FOR SNOW

Getting Around

- On foot – consider sturdy, waterproof boots or shoes. The traction devices that slip on over boots can be helpful.
- By car – Good quality snow tires, and chains or snow socks for tires are likely to be of help. Keep in mind that it may be days before streets are cleared. Cars with low ground clearance can easily get stuck and become a hazard for others. Every vehicle should have a shovel, chains or snow socks, warm clothing, flashlight and jumper cables available.

Hazards

- Similar to ice, but remember that snow is heavy and can block water drainage leading to ice dams that create leaks, and roof failure.
- Deep snow can block furnace vents, especially if furnaces are located in the basement and vents are near ground level, and the furnace is high-efficiency natural gas type that has supply air and exhaust pipes. This may cause furnace to shut off inexplicably. Learn where vents are located and be sure to keep those at ground level clear of accumulating snow.