



Disaster Preparedness Volunteer

Serving the WV Counties of Calhoun, Jackson, Pleasants, Ritchie, Roane, Tyler, Wirt and Wood

Mid Ohio Valley Health
Department

Volume 3, Issue 1
February 2008

Cold Weather Safety

Home

- Insulate walls and attic; caulk or weather strip doors and windows or use interior plastic sheeting
- Insulate water lines that run along outer walls
- Have chimneys and flues inspected
- Install an outdoor thermometer that can be read from inside your home
- Have an alternative heat source such as a fireplace, battery or gas powered space heater, kerosene or propane heat source, and a generator for backup power
- Prepare an emergency kit and include items such as bottled water, no-cook foods, manual can opener, battery powered light source, batteries, medications, baby food, battery powered radio

Automobile

- Keep your car fueled and in good working order. Be sure to check the following:
- Check and fill fluids
 - Ensure heater, brakes, ignition, exhaust, battery, defroster are operable
 - Check lighting systems and tires and replace if necessary
 - Prepare an emergency kit for your car and include items such as cell phone, shovel, windshield scraper, battery-powered radio with extra batteries, flashlight, water,

snack foods, extra clothing, blankets, chains, canned tire sealant, jumper cables, flares, first aid kit

Water Supply

- Extreme cold can cause water pipes in your home to freeze and sometimes break.
- Leave water taps slightly open so they drip continuously
 - Keep the indoor temperature warm
 - Allow more heated air near pipes by opening cabinet doors under sinks
 - If pipes do freeze, do not thaw them with a torch, rather, thaw them slowly with warm air from an electric hair dryer

Outdoor Safety

- Be aware that babies and the elderly are more at risk from the cold
- Dress warmly and wear loose-fitting, layered clothing
- Tightly woven, water resistant/water proof outer garments provide more warmth
- Wear mittens rather than gloves
- If shoveling snow, stretch to warm up and take breaks often
- Cover your mouth to protect your lungs from extremely cold air
- Avoid strenuous work, it is a strain on the heart

-Drink water or other fluids to avoid dehydration

-Watch for signs of frostbite or hypothermia

-If you think you have frostbite or hypothermia, avoid food or beverages containing caffeine or alcohol —both can worsen your symptoms

Understand Wind Chill

The Wind Chill index is the temperature your body feels when the air temperature is combined with the wind speed. It is based on the rate of heat loss from exposed skin. As the speed of the wind increases, it can carry heat away from your body much more quickly, causing skin temperature to drop. When there are high winds, serious weather-related health problems are more likely, even when temperatures are only cool.

Taking preventive action is your best defense against having to deal with extreme cold weather conditions. By preparing your home and car in advance for winter emergencies, and by observing safety precautions during times of extremely cold weather, you can reduce the risk of weather-related health problems.

Educational and Volunteer Opportunities

Western Migration/U2R Focus Group Sessions

Thursday, Feb. 19th

Friday, Feb. 20th

Blennerhassett Hotel

11 a.m.—1 p.m.

Call or e-mail for reservations

marthalamp@wvdhhr.org

304-485-7439

Volunteers are needed to assist with the **Mission of Mercy Dental Clinic** scheduled for July 31 and August 1, 2009. The clinic will be held at WVU-Parkersburg.

Hours of operation are
6 a.m.—6 p.m.

To register as a volunteer log onto www.movhd.com/dental. More information is available and you can register directly online.

Free online training opportunities exist at

<http://training.fema.gov/IS/>

If you are not currently a volunteer through the Mid Ohio Valley Health Department's Threat Preparedness Unit or Medical Reserve Corps but would like to sign up or obtain additional information, please contact 304-485-7493,

or log on to

<http://www.movhd.com/mrc>