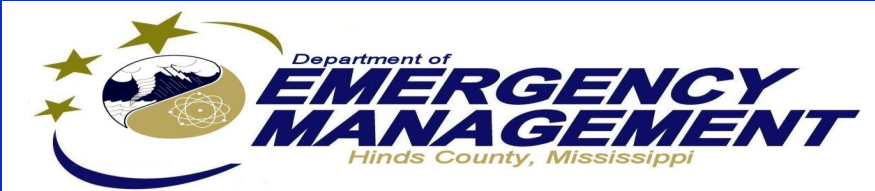


Quarterly Newsletter



Website Address: <http://www.co.hinds.ms.us/pgs/ctydivision/eoc.asp>

Winter Weather Preparedness

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Although winter weather in Mississippi does not compare to the extreme cold and snow storms in other parts of the country, there are things you can do to be prepared for the occasional bouts of cold weather in the area.

Stay Warm

- If possible, stay indoors and dress warmly.
- Close off unused rooms.
- Seal drafts from doors and windows.

Outdoor Safety

- Wear loose-fitting, layered clothes for more warmth. Outer garments should be tightly woven and water repellent.
- Wear mittens rather than gloves –mittens are warmer.
- Cover your mouth to protect your lungs from extremely cold air.
- Watch for signs of frostbite: Feelings of “pins and needles” followed by numbness (no feeling). Skin may freeze hard and look white. When thawed out, skin is red and painful. Very bad frostbite may cause blisters or gangrene (black, dead tissue).
- Watch for signs up hypothermia (uncontrolled shivering, slow speech, memory loss, stumbling, sleepiness, extreme tiredness).
- If you think you have frostbite or hypothermia, don’t eat or drink anything containing caffeine or alcohol—they can worsen your symptoms.
- Drink warm liquids that do not contain caffeine or alcohol (alcoholic drinks cause your body to lose heat more quickly).
- Do not eat snow! Snow can lower your body temperature and help bring on hypothermia.

Source: Mississippi State Department of Health



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Car Safety Precautions During Cold Weather



Vehicle maintenance is very important during the cold months of the year. Prior to taking a trip a mechanic should check out the following things on your car, antifreeze level, brakes, battery system, oil, lights, heater/defroster and the tires.

There should be an emergency preparedness kit in the automobile including these items:

- Windshield scraper
- Flashlight
- Battery powered radio
- Extra batteries
- Water
- Snack food
- Matches
- First aid kit
- Pocket knife
- Blanket
- Booster cables
- Flares
- Extra hats, socks, mittens
- Necessary medications
- Rope or tow chain



Source: <http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather>

Carbon Monoxide Safety



Have furnaces and heaters inspected every year. Carbon monoxide is invisible, odorless and tasteless. Inspection helps protect yourself and your family.

Install a carbon monoxide detector in your house, and plan to check its battery every time you check your smoke detector batteries.

Precautions you can take to prevent carbon monoxide exposure:

- Never burn anything in a stove or fireplace that is not vented properly
- Never heat your house with a gas oven
- Never run a generator indoors, in an enclosed space such as a basement, or near a window
- Do not warm your car up in a closed garage
- If your garage is attached to your house, close the door to the house even while you warm up the car

Sources: www.ready.gov/winter-weather & Mississippi State Department of Health



Caution: Carbon Monoxide Kills

Carbon monoxide (**CO**) is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas. A by-product of combustion, it can be produced by ordinary appliances, and is a common hazard in the home. Mild exposure can cause symptoms such as nausea, dizziness, or headaches; while severe poisoning can result in brain or heart damage or even death. The incomplete burning of any material containing carbon, such as gasoline, natural gas, oil, kerosene, propane, charcoal, or wood, produces the poisonous gas. One of the most common sources of exposure in the home is the gas or kerosene-powered heater. Gas-powered water heaters, stoves, and furnaces may also produce carbon monoxide.

CO prevents the body from using oxygen efficiently, causing asphyxiation. CO remains inside the body for hours. The effects depend on how much CO is in the air, how long it is breathed, and the health of an individual.

Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning:

Low levels of CO poisoning can be confused with flu symptoms, food poisoning or other illnesses and can have a long-term health risk if left uncorrected. CO can also impair judgment. The longer a person breathes CO, the worse the effects can be. Symptoms of mild CO poisoning may include:

- Shortness of breath
- Mild nausea
- Mild headaches

Moderate levels of CO exposure can cause death if the following symptoms persist for a long measure of time:

- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Light-headedness
- Fatigue
- Confusion
- Disorientation
- Overall Weakness

High levels of CO can be fatal within minutes.

Treatment Options:

Immediate measures you can take to help those suffering from CO poisoning include:

- Place disoriented or unconscious victims in fresh air **IMMEDIATELY**.
- If you cannot get the people out of the home, then open all windows and doors. Any combustion appliances (gas stoves, water heaters, furnaces, boilers, etc.) should be turned off.

Take those who were subjected to CO to a hospital emergency room as quickly as possible. A simple blood test will be able to determine if CO poisoning has occurred.

Source: Mississippi State Department of Health



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Emergency Management protects communities by coordinating and integrating all activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the capability to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from threatened or actual natural disasters, acts of terrorism, or other manmade disasters.