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### **Time to Prepare for Winter Weather**

Now is the time to prepare for snow, ice and strong winds. It is important to prepare since winter weather can cause power outages resulting in the loss of heat, water or communications to our homes and businesses. With the projected strong winter storms through the weekend, we suggest that you check out - <http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather> for a list of ways to prepare.

Preparing for winter storms is similar to preparing for other emergencies like floods or wildfires. Following the three steps below, can help your family be prepared for most winter events.

**Step 1:** Make an emergency supply kit which includes items like non-perishable food, water, batteries, flashlights and a hand crank radio. Add the following items for winter: rock salt, sand, snow shovels and adequate clothing and blankets to keep you warm.

**Step 2:** Make a family emergency plan. You may not be with your family when a storm hits, so know how to contact one another.

**Step 3:** Make sure your home is well insulated and that you have weather stripping around your doors and windows. Insulate pipes with insulation or newspapers and plastic and allow faucets to drip a little during cold weather to help avoid freezing. Keep fire extinguishers on hand and make sure everyone in your family knows how to use it. House fires pose an additional risk as more people turn to alternate heating sources without taking the proper safety precautions.

Lastly, remember where to find storm updates. An excellent source for weather forecasts and weather warnings is <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/fgz/>. You can dial 311 from any phone for updates from the Health Department, Emergency Management, Fire and Forest information. You can go online to 311info.net as well as watch the news or listen to the radio for weather updates. If you have any further questions please contact Apache County Public Health Service District, 928-333-6430.

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