



U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS CENTER

4905 Ruf Ave. Fort Rucker, AL 36362-5363
Comm. (334) 255-3770 Fax (334) 255-2609
<https://safety.army.mil>

READY ...OR NOT?

Prepare now for winter survival

David San Miguel
Directorate of Communication and Public Affairs
U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center

Though much of the nation experienced unseasonably hot weather this past summer, the changing of seasons and hazards of winter cannot and should not be dismissed by Soldiers and their families.

Last year's winter brought record snowfalls, sleet, freezing rain, ice, gusty winds and bitterly cold air to much of the United States. Two of 2014's biggest storms killed at least 34 people and caused an estimated \$750 million in damage.

According to the American Red Cross, dozens of people die from exposure to cold each year. Still more are killed in vehicle accidents and fires due to winter weather. The only way to prevent these injuries and deaths is to be adequately prepared for wintry conditions.

Understanding what to expect when the meteorologist announces changes to the weather forecast is a first step. Stay informed by listening to the National Weather Service or local radio and television stations for weather updates. Individuals should familiarize themselves with weather terminology to ensure they make informed decisions on what actions to take when storm conditions arise.

Called "deceptive killers" by the NWS, winter storms are usually not directly responsible for most fatalities. Instead, deaths are incidental to traffic accidents and from prolonged exposure to cold.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends families keep an emergency supply kit on hand and have their vehicles properly prepped and ready for winter storm emergencies. Home kits should include a gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, three-day supply of non-perishable food, battery-powered or hand-cranked radio and NOAA weather radio with tone alert, flashlight, extra batteries, whistle, manual can opener, and cellphone with chargers. Other suggested items include prescription medications, eyeglasses, infant formula, diapers, cash or traveler's checks, sleeping bags, blankets and household chlorine bleach.

If it's absolutely necessary to drive, plan trips carefully and listen to the radio or television to monitor forecasts and road conditions. Also top off your gas tank, ensure antifreeze levels are adequate, and test the battery, ignition, heater and defrosting systems for proper operation.

For more information on winter storm safety, visit www.ready.gov or <https://safety.army.mil>.