

FEMA Response to Severe Winter Weather

With large sections of the United States being impacted by extreme cold, snow, ice and high winds, FEMA is ready to respond to meet the needs of state, local and tribal governments and actively coordinating with impacted states to address unmet needs.

FEMA is urging individuals impacted by the recent winter storms to listen to state and local officials about warming centers, as well as storm warnings and road conditions in their area. Heed advice about mask wearing and social distancing in any warming center or other public shelter.

Even as FEMA is focused on supporting vaccination distribution efforts, the agency maintains its mission readiness and is supporting multiple disasters, including the recent emergency declarations for Oklahoma and Texas. FEMA has moved water, blankets, shelf-stable meals, generators, and fuel to help states respond to this event.

Emergency Declarations

- On Feb. 14, President Biden approved an [Emergency Declaration for all 254 counties in the state of Texas](#) due to a severe winter storm starting Feb. 11. This declaration authorizes FEMA to provide emergency protective measures for mass care and sheltering and direct federal assistance under the Public Assistance program at 75 percent federal funding.
- FEMA is providing equipment and resources to the state of Texas alleviate impacts from these storms:
 - FEMA has made 60 generators and fuel available to the state of Texas to support critical infrastructure sites.
 - FEMA has 729,000 liters of water, more than 10,000 wool blankets, 50,000 cotton blankets, and 225,000 meals staged in Fort Worth, Texas.
 - FEMA has deployed staging management team from Atlanta to support Texas severe winter storm response. The team is scheduled to arrive in Texas today.
- On Feb. 18, President Biden approved an Emergency Declaration for all 77 counties in the state of Oklahoma due to a severe winter storm starting Feb. 8. This declaration authorizes FEMA to provide emergency protective measures for mass care and sheltering and direct federal assistance under the Public Assistance program at 75 percent federal funding.



FEMA

- Louisiana Governor Edwards has requested an emergency declaration due to severe winter storms. The request is under review. Several parishes in Louisiana have closed offices and school systems due to the weather. Rolling blackouts and water systems disruptions are being reported.

Stay Safe in Winter Weather

Follow these tips to stay safe and warm when winter weather hits.

Avoid Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

- Use a Generator Safely! Never use a generator inside a home, basement, shed or garage even if doors and windows are open.
- Keep generators outside and far away from windows, doors and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors. Read both the label on your generator and the owner's manual and follow the instructions.
- Avoid plugging emergency generators into electric outlets or hooking them directly to your home's electrical system – they can feed electricity back into the power lines, putting you and line workers in danger. If you use a generator, connect the equipment you want to run directly to the outlets on the generator.
- Install and maintain carbon monoxide alarms inside your home to provide early warning of carbon monoxide.
- If the carbon monoxide alarm sounds, move quickly to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window or door. Call 911!

Stay Safe and Warm

- Severe winter weather may cause you to lose heat. Have adequate clothing and blankets to keep you warm. Include extra blankets for pets and service animals.
- If you go to a warming center or public shelter, be sure to take supplies to protect yourself and your family. These supplies include hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol and two face masks per person.
 - Residents in Texas can [find the closest warming shelter online](#).
 - To find out if 2-1-1 services are available in your area or to search for resources, visit [211.org](#).
- Check on neighbors who may need assistance such as infants, children, older adults and people with disabilities.
- If you lose heat, due to severe winter weather, avoid carbon monoxide poisoning and fires.
 - A grill, camp stove or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal burning devices should never be used inside a home, garage, basement, crawlspace or any partially enclosed area. These should only be used outdoors and at least 20 feet away from windows.

- Never use a gas stovetop or oven to heat your home.
- During and after an emergency, you may need to survive on your own for several days. Being prepared means having your own [food](#), [water](#) and [other supplies](#) to last for at least 72 hours. Your kit should also include a battery-powered or hand-crank radio and extra flashlights and batteries.
- Have an emergency kit in your car with items such as water, blankets and jumper cables.
- FEMA has additional information on how to prepare for winter weather at [Ready.gov](#).
- If you have damage from these storms, or have been severely impacted, check your insurance policies or call your local agent for assistance you may be eligible to receive.

Winter Storm Impact on COVID-19 Vaccination Efforts

Severe weather continues to impact COVID-19 vaccination efforts across the US, with heavy snow, freezing rain, ice, and high winds potentially affecting areas in the storm's path.

- More than 2,000 vaccine sites are located in areas with power outages.
- All infrastructure is affected, but challenges to Healthcare and Public Health are particularly critical, potentially peaking Friday with the next storm impacting the area Wednesday into Thursday.

Contact Us

If you have any questions, please contact FEMA Office of External Affairs:

- Congressional Affairs at (202) 646-4500 or at FEMA-Congressional-Affairs@fema.dhs.gov
- Intergovernmental Affairs at (202) 646-3444 or at FEMA-IGA@fema.dhs.gov
- Tribal Affairs at (202) 646-3444 or at FEMA-Tribal@fema.dhs.gov
- Private Sector Engagement at (202) 646-3444 or at nbeoc@max.gov

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Also, follow Acting Administrator Bob Fenton on Twitter [@FEMA_Fenton](#).

FEMA Mission

Helping people before, during, and after disasters.