



**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY**



MASSACHUSETTS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

400 Worcester Road Framingham, MA 01702-5399

Tel: 508-820-2000 Fax: 508-820-2030

Website: www.mass.gov/mema

Charles D. Baker
Governor

Kurt N. Schwartz
Director

Karyn E. Polito
Lieutenant Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 26, 2015

CONTACT: Peter Judge, MEMA PIO
(508) 820-2002
peter.judge@state.ma.us

MEMA'S TIPS FOR PREPARING FOR THE STORM

FRAMINGHAM, MA – “Before the arrival of the storm this evening, it is important that you take the proper steps to ensure the safety of your family and home,” said Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) Director Kurt Schwartz.

- Ensure your [Emergency Kit](#) is stocked with supplies to enable you to survive on your own for at least three to five days. There should be a first-aid kit, essential prescription medicines, non-perishable foods (those that require no refrigeration such as canned goods, dried fruits and nuts), a manual can opener, water (one gallon per person, per day), flashlights and extra batteries along with a portable radio or NOAA Weather Radio, baby-care or pet supplies items, extra blankets, sleeping bags and a fire extinguisher.
- Ensure that your [Winter Emergency Car Kit](#) is well stocked to keep you and your vehicle safe.
- This storm has the potential to bring widespread power outages, so take the opportunity to fully charge your cell phone, laptop, and any other devices in advance of a power outage.
- Those along the coast should be aware of potential flooding. Pay close attention to directives from you local public safety officials.
- Keep extra batteries for your phone in a safe place or purchase a solar-powered or hand crank charger. These chargers are good emergency tools to keep your laptop and other small electronics working in the event of a power outage. If you own a car, purchase a car phone charger because you can charge your phone if you lose power at your home.
- Gas up you automobiles because many local filling stations may also lose their ability to pump gas.
- Download the free [Massachusetts Alerts](#) app to your smartphone to receive important weather alerts and messages from MEMA. Easy instructions are available at www.mass.gov/mema/mobileapp.
- Trim dead tree branches and limbs close to your home. Ice, snow and wind can combine to snap limbs that can take down power lines or damage your home.
- Clean gutters. Melting snow and ice can build up if gutters are clogged with debris. When thawing begins, the water can back up under your roof and eaves causing damage to walls and ceilings.

Region I
P.O. Box 116
365 East Street
Tewksbury, MA 01876
Tel: 978-328-1500 Fax: 978-851-8218

Region II
P.O. Box 54
12-I Rear Administration Road
Bridgewater, MA 02324-0054
Tel: 508-427-0400 Fax: 508-697-8869

Region III / IV
1002 Suffield Street
Agawam, MA 01001
Tel: 413-750-1400 Fax: 413-821-1599

- Check your homeowner's insurance policy to ensure adequate coverage.
- Ensure that your Smoke and Carbon Monoxide (CO) detectors are working correctly and have fresh batteries. Check your outside fuel exhaust vents, making sure that they are not obstructed by snow or ice. Never use cooking equipment intended for outside use indoors as a heat source or cooking device
- Have sufficient heating fuel, as regular sources may be cut off. Have the option of emergency heating equipment and fuel (a gas fireplace, wood burning stove or fireplace) so you can safely keep at least one room livable. Be sure the room is well ventilated.
- To keep pipes from freezing, wrap them in insulation or layers of newspapers, covering the newspapers with plastic to keep out moisture. Let faucets drip a little to avoid freezing.
- Know how to safely shut off gas, electric power and water valves.
- If you use medical equipment in your home that requires electricity, talk to your health care provider about how you can prepare for its use during a power outage. Ensure you have extra batteries for medical equipment and assistive devices.
- If you have life-support devices that depend on electricity, contact your local electric company about your power needs for life-support devices (home dialysis, suction, breathing machines, etc.) in advance of an emergency. Some utility companies will put you on a "priority reconnection service" list. Talk to your equipment suppliers about your power options and also let the fire department know that you are dependent on life-support devices.
- Find out about individual assistance that may be available in your community if you need it. Register in advance with the local emergency management agency, the local fire department, other government agencies or non-profit groups. Tell them of your individual needs or those of a family member and find out what assistance, help or services can be provided.
- If you use in-home support services, Meals-on-Wheels, Life Alert or other support services, work with them to personalize emergency preparedness plans to meet your needs so you can keep in touch with them during and after an emergency. That contact may be your lifeline to other services in a disaster.
- If you have or may have transportation needs, work with local transportation providers and/or disability services (e.g., Paratransit, Independent Living Centers) to plan ahead for accessible transportation.
- Develop back-up plans for personal assistance services, hospice or other forms of in-home assistance.
- Be a good neighbor. Check in on friends, family, and neighbors, particularly those most susceptible to extreme temperatures and power outages such as seniors and those with access and functional needs.

MEMA is the state agency charged with ensuring the state is prepared to withstand, respond to, and recover from all types of emergencies and disasters, including natural hazards, accidents, deliberate attacks, and technological and infrastructure failures. MEMA is committed to an all hazards approach to emergency management. By building and sustaining effective partnerships with federal, state and local government agencies, and with the private sector - - individuals, families, non-profits, and businesses - - MEMA ensures the Commonwealth's ability to rapidly recover from large and small disasters by assessing and mitigating threats and hazards, enhancing preparedness, coordinating response operations, and strengthening our capacity to rebuild and recover.

For additional information about MEMA, go to www.mass.gov/mema. Also, follow MEMA on *Twitter* at www.twitter.com/MassEMA; *Facebook* at www.facebook.com/MassachusettsEMA; and *YouTube* at www.youtube.com/MassachusettsEMA. *Massachusetts Alerts*: to receive emergency information on your smartphone, including severe weather alerts from the National Weather Service and emergency information from MEMA, download the *Massachusetts Alerts* free app. To learn more about *Massachusetts Alerts*, and for additional information on how to download the free app onto your smartphone, visit: www.mass.gov/mema/mobileapp.

Region I
P.O. Box 116
365 East Street
Tewksbury, MA 01876
Tel: 978-328-1500 Fax: 978-851-8218

Region II
P.O. Box 54
12-I Rear Administration Road
Bridgewater, MA 02324-0054
Tel: 508-427-0400 Fax: 508-697-8869

Region III / IV
1002 Suffield Street
Agawam, MA 01001
Tel: 413-750-1400 Fax: 413-821-1599