

BE PREPARED!

Before the Storm Strikes

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Now that we have weathered our first hurricane, it may be a good time to be certain we are prepared for upcoming winter snow and ice storms. Most of us have gone through enough winter storms to know the basics about being prepared at home. This article will focus on being prepared if you are stranded in your car by a winter storm. If you must be out in a storm, keep your gas tank full, avoid travelling alone, let someone know your timetable, and carry a winter storm survival kit. Your survival kit should include the following:

- Mobile phone, charger, and if possible an extra fully charged battery
- Blankets or a sleeping bag
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- First Aid kit including a knife
- High calorie, non-perishable food (like energy bars)
- Extra clothing for warmth
- Large, empty can to use as an emergency toilet and toilet paper
- Small can and waterproof matches to melt snow for drinking water
- Sack of sand or cat litter for extra traction
- Shovel
- Windshield scraper and brush
- Tool kit
- Tow rope
- Jumper cables
- Water container
- Compass and road maps

If you are stranded during a storm, **stay in your vehicle**. You will become quickly disoriented in wind-driven snow and cold. Run the motor about 10 minutes every hour for heat. Open the window a little to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Make sure the vent pipe is not blocked. **Be visible to rescuers**. Turn the dome light on at night when running the engine. Tie a colored cloth (preferable red) to your antenna or door. After the now stops falling, raise your hood to indicate you need help. And finally **exercise: move arms, legs, fingers and toes vigorously to keep blood circulating and to keep warm**.