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**CITY OFFICIALS URGE CHICAGOANS TO PREPARE FOR COLD AND SNOWY
CONDITIONS IN UPCOMING WEEK**

Winter Storm Warning in effect Saturday through Monday

The City of Chicago is urging residents to take precautions for the wintry weather and be aware of City-offered services and tips to stay safe during the frigid temperatures and accumulating snow expected this weekend and week ahead. Those seeking access to warming centers and/or experiencing insufficient heat are being encouraged to contact 3-1-1 for immediate assistance.

The National Weather Service has issued a winter storm warning, which is now in effect until Monday. A winter storm warning means there is a potential for significant snow, sleet or ice accumulations that may impact travel.

"As Chicago braces for extreme temperatures and snow, we want residents to know City departments are prepared to assist those needing well-being checks, snow removal and other cold-weather services," said Mayor Emanuel. "We ask Chicagoans to do their part and shovel sidewalks and help out by checking in on family, friends and neighbors during extremely cold or snowy weather."

The City will continue to will continue to monitor conditions to prepare for and respond to extreme weather as early as possible.

"Cold temperatures can cause many hazards from frozen pipes to dead car batteries, as well as pose a serious threat to health and safety," said OEMC Executive Director Alicia

Tate-Nadeau. "We encourage residents to prepare in advance and utilize the services available to keep safe and warm."

The Chicago Department of Streets and Sanitation manages over 9,400 lane miles of roadway and maintains a fleet of over 300 snow vehicles, including 20 new trucks that have been serviced and staged in anticipation of the first snow fall. In addition, the Department has approximately 374,000 tons of salt stationed at salt piles throughout the city.

"The Chicago Department of Streets and Sanitation has been closely monitoring the storm system which is expected to drop several inches of snow across the Chicagoland area this weekend," said Commissioner Charles L. Williams. "The department will work as quickly and efficiently as possible to clear the roadways and we encourage all motorists to drive according to conditions."

Residents can monitor the City's snow plows in real time on the Plow Tracker, www.chicagoshovels.org.

Cold-Weather Tips

Motorists should take extra precautions to winterize vehicles and have necessary supplies on-the-go. Keep in mind, disabled vehicles or distracted driving can cause accidents, impact traffic and others or requiring emergency services.

As many are out and about for the holiday season, it's important to stay informed of changing conditions and heed warnings and advisories. Residents should know the signs and care of frostbite and hypothermia. Winter preparation information is available at alertchicago.com, including links to other local, state and federal resources.

As the city braces for extremely cold conditions, the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) makes these simple suggestions to help keep residents safe:

- * Avoid unnecessary trips outside-if you must go out, limit the time you stay outside;
- * Wear several layers of loose, warm clothing;
- * Keep your head, hands and feet covered when outdoors;
- * Stay dry, because moisture can damage the insulating effectiveness of clothing;
- * Pay extra attention to your daily needs: get enough sleep, eat high energy foods, drink warm beverages to help your body stay warm, and avoid alcoholic beverages;
- * Recognize the symptoms of hypothermia: stiff muscles, shivering, puffy or swollen face, cold skin, slow breathing and mental confusion.

Additionally, City officials encourage those seeking access to warming centers and/or experiencing insufficient heat, the City maintains a 24/7 network of sites (various social

service agencies and select City facilities) that are available to residents in need of shelter. To connect to a location, residents can call 3-1-1 for immediate assistance.

Snow Tips

Residents should be aware of City of Chicago Municipal Code in which every owner, lessee, tenant, occupant or other person having charge of any building or lot of ground abutting upon any public way or public space shall remove the snow and ice from the sidewalk. It is everyone's responsibility to make sure the sidewalks are clear of snow and ice for everyone's safety. We urge all to help senior or disabled neighbors with this effort. For more information, visit www.cityofchicago.org/cdot

Motorists should also not impede snow plow operations and be sure to pull over for any emergency vehicles. Also, motorists should be aware of the city's snow route parking restrictions and overnight parking bans in areas and read signage before parking on city streets. See the Streets and Sanitation website for more details and additional information at www.cityofchicago.org/dss.

Information for Homeowners and Renters

The Chicago Heat Ordinance mandates that landlords supply heat to rental units during cold weather months. The Heat Ordinance mandates that during cold weather months, landlords supply heat to rental units or to any unit where owners do not have individual control of the heat. From September 15 through June 1, the temperature inside a rental residence is required to be at least 68 degrees from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m., and at least 66 degrees from 10:30 p.m. to 8:30 a.m.

Per the Heat Ordinance residents may contact 3-1-1 operators to file a heat complaint, which will signal an inspector from the Department of Buildings (DOB) to assess a caller's building and heating system immediately. Landlords face fines of up to \$500 per day, per violation, for each day they do not supply adequate heat. The reason for lack of heat does not matter -- landlords must follow the law, and apartments must be heated.

The Chicago Department of Water Management (DWM) encourages residents to act now to make sure pipes in homes are properly insulated and not exposed to freezing air. This includes pipes in garages and unheated areas of the home. If pipes do freeze, do not use candles or any open flame to thaw them; instead, use a hair dryer or heating pad.

The Chicago Fire Department (CFD) does not recommended using space heaters; however, if used, be sure they are UL certified and at least 3 feet from anything that can ignite. Use of a space heater in children's rooms should be monitored closely as children sometimes move them close to or into the bed with tragic results. If extension cords are used, they should be rated at 15 amps minimum and never put cords under carpet. With the added

demand on furnaces and boilers, CFD also reminds residents are required by ordinance to have working carbon monoxide detectors to protect against carbon monoxide leaks from a heating system that could be fatal over time.

Information for Travelers, Public Transportation Users

The Chicago Department of Aviation reminds those with travel plans through O'Hare or Midway International Airports to check their airline's website for flight status before going to the airport and to plan to arrive at least two hours in advance of their scheduled flight. Travelers are encouraged to check for updates by following O'Hare's Facebook page or Twitter account @fly2ohare and Midway's Facebook page or Twitter account @fly2midway, in addition to their website, www.FlyChicago.com.

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) staff is extensively trained on handling winter weather operations and will, working closely with OEMC and other City agencies, carefully monitor weather and traffic conditions to quickly adapt transit operations to changing circumstances. What's more, CTA buses and rail system are equipped with features designed to mitigate the effects of cold temperatures and snow. CTA is also prepared to communicate timely service information to customers in the event of unplanned changes or significant delays in service through informational displays at rail stations and select bus stops; and through social media (Twitter and Facebook) and CTA's web site. CTA also encourages customers to sign up at www.transitchicago.com for free subscription service alerts to be notified of service changes or issues.

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