



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 29, 2017

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

Caitlin Polochak | CDPH

312-747-9191

Marjani Williams | DSS

312-502-5321

**CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH REMINDS RESIDENTS TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS
DURING COLD WEATHER**

City crews prepared to respond to second consecutive day of snow

The Chicago Department of Public Health continues to urge residents to heed safety tips to avoid weather and health emergencies during the extreme cold temperatures expected to last into the week ahead. Anyone seeking access to warming centers and/or experiencing insufficient heat are being encouraged to contact 3-1-1 for immediate assistance.

"As the City braces for cold temperatures and winter weather, we would like to caution residents to take care of themselves, and to also provide assistance to your neighbors, family members, pets and friends, particularly those who are elderly or have disabilities," said CDPH Commissioner Julie Morita, M.D. "By working together we can make sure we all stay warm, safe and healthy this season."

CDPH recommends residents following these simple steps to stay safe:

- Keep at least three days' worth of drinking water and canned/no-cook food on hand. Put together an emergency kit that includes extra blankets, first aid and medication supplies and a flashlight with spare batteries.
- 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.
- If you go out into the cold, limit the time you stay outside. Break longer tasks into shorter ones, with indoor rest periods in between. Do not let children play outside for long periods of time.

Motorists can also take extra precautions by:

- Traveling during winter storms can be dangerous, so avoid long trips if possible.
- If you have to drive, plan your trip ahead of time and let someone know where you're heading.
- Make sure your vehicle is in good working condition before driving. Make sure the windows are free of ice and that you have an emergency kit that includes water, blankets and a snow shovel.
- Drive slower, increase your following distance and always be prepared to turn back if conditions become too dangerous.
- If you're taking public transit, take the extra step of locating the bus or train schedule so you know what time it will arrive. This will limit the time you have to spend outside at the stop.

Crews from the Department of Streets and Sanitation are also gearing up to respond to a second consecutive day of snow projected to begin Friday afternoon, ahead of the evening rush hour. Salt spreaders will be working with a focus on keeping the City's arterial routes and Lake Shore Drive safe and passable for motorists and buses until the snow stops, then transitioning to residential streets.

"DSS continues to closely monitor this winter storm system and remains ready to deploy additional resources to ensure that motorists can travel safely this holiday weekend," said Acting Commissioner John Tully. "We ask that motorists take their time when travelling and drive according to conditions."

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

For more information on heating assistance, shelter or other assisted cold weather related needs, call 311.

###