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The American Red Cross of Greater Cleveland Urges Preparedness for Wicked Winter Weather

Safety Tips for Your Home and Vehicle

Cleveland, OH -- January 6, 2010 - As record-breaking temperatures continue throughout Northeast Ohio and snow levels grow, we head full steam ahead into the winter season. The American Red Cross of Greater Cleveland is urging families to take appropriate actions to be prepared for hazardous winter weather. As the Greater Cleveland Red Cross responds to an average of a fire per day, it is important to stay warm, stay safe, and avoid fire hazards.

"Winter storms must be taken seriously since the majority of winter-related incidents are caused by events related to heavy snowfall, high winds, and freezing rain," said Susan Elder, Chief Marketing Officer. "People can become homebound without utilities or other services. Motorists can become stranded in their vehicles. Walking and driving can become hazardous. But families will remain safe if they take action to be prepared ahead of time."

The Red Cross recommends families prepare for the possible negative effects of winter weather in a number of ways:

Prepare an Emergency Supply Kit For Your Home:

- Three-day supply of water (one gallon of water per person per day for drinking and hygiene)
- Three-day supply of non perishable, high-energy food and a manual can opener
- First aid kit and essential medications
- Battery-powered or hand-cranked radio
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Extra warm clothing, including boots, gloves, and hat
- Copies of important documents (birth certificate, title/deed to home, insurance policies, etc) in a water-proof container

Use Alternate Heating/Lighting Sources Wisely to Avoid a House Fire:

- Do not leave space heaters unattended and make sure they are far away from flammable objects.
- Do not use candles. Be sure to have working flashlights and extra batteries on hand for power outages.
- Use a generator correctly – follow directions carefully. Never operate it inside, including the basement, garage, carport or near any open windows.

Prepare an Emergency Supply Kit For Your Vehicle: (all of the above plus)

- Blankets or sleeping bags.
- Jumper cables.
- Fire extinguisher (5 lb., A-B-C type).
- Compass and road maps.
- Shovel
- Tire repair kit and pump.
- Flares
- Extra clothing to keep dry
- Sack of sand or cat litter (for tire traction)
- Rope

Be Informed:

- Learn how you would receive information from local officials should hazardous winter weather affect your neighborhood - television, radio, internet

- Consider getting first aid and CPR training in case you need to respond in an emergency.

For more information about how you can prepare for a variety of emergencies, visit www.redcross-cleveland.org or visit www.generationready.org for a full spectrum of specific preparedness tips provided through the Red Cross GenerationReady program™.

The American Red Cross of Greater Cleveland saves and improves the quality of lives as the community leader in emergency preparedness, responding to disasters with humanitarian aid and providing health and safety training.

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