

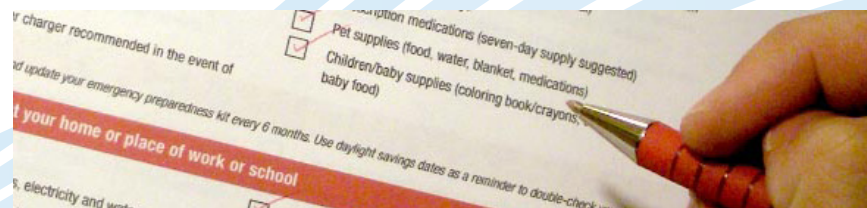
WINDSTORMS



Last week, you learned about developing a family emergency-preparedness plan for winter weather emergencies. Windstorms such as the Columbus Day Storm of 1962 can cause events that are potentially very dangerous and put us in emergency situations. Getting prepared prior to windstorms occurring will keep us safe and comfortable. Today, let's take a look at how you can be prepared for windstorms.

A windstorm like the Columbus Day Storm of 1962 can impact the community in many ways. Below are some of the risks associated with a major windstorm:

- Downed trees
- Blowing debris
- Electrocutation from downed power lines
- Possibility of loss of electricity, water, gas and other utilities including phone/cell service
- Carbon monoxide poisoning from using charcoal grills inside the home to cook/heat or from improper generator ventilation
- Food spoiling in the refrigerator/freezer because of power failure
- Loss of life (hit by trees, touching downed power lines) or injuries
- Lack of communication due to lack of power for cell and cordless phones
- Damaged buildings
- Power outages for an extended period of time
- Transportation routes affected by downed trees, structures and power lines



Use Take Winter By Storm checklists to prepare **prior** to winter storms. You can find detailed lists, Emergency Contact Cards in multiple languages, and additional resources and tips in our Teacher's Guide at seattletimes.com/NIE and at TakeWinterByStorm.org.

POWER OUTAGES

During windstorms, power outages in particular can be the source of much danger. What should you do in a power outage?

- Report power outages or downed power lines as soon as they occur by calling your utility company.
- If your power goes out, use flashlights. Avoid candles, oil lamps or anything with an open flame.
- Use light sticks or small flashlights as landing strips for trip-prone areas in your home. Pick up clutter from floors to avoid stubbed toes.
- Keep your contact devices (cellphones, smartphones, laptops) fully charged in case of a power outage or prior to heading out into the elements for an extended length of time. To ensure backup, bring chargers for contact devices with you.
- The best form of communication during a power outage is a land line with a corded phone. It doesn't need to be charged!



WHEEDLE WEATHER PREPAREDNESS TIP

Keep one or more power outage go-to places in your home stocked with a small flashlight, extra batteries and utility contact information. If the power goes out, go to that place first. Home communication centers, junk drawers, bedside tables, etc., make great locations.

POWER LINE SAFETY

Yikes! That's still HOT! Did you know that a downed power line can cause the ground around it to be energized? Follow these tips to stay safe around downed power lines:

- Assume it is live. Never touch a downed power line or anything near it.
- Stay as far away from it as you can and immediately call your local utility.
- If you find yourself near a downed power line, shuffle your feet away from the power line to avoid ground shock.
- Do not drive over downed power lines. Should a power line fall on your car when you're inside it, stay in the car until help arrives.
- If you must leave your car because of fire or other danger, jump away from the vehicle so that you do not touch the vehicle and ground at the same time. Land with your feet together and shuffle your feet away from the line to a safe location.



WHEEDLE WEATHER PREPAREDNESS TIP

Do the shuffle! Too close to a downed power line? Dance away by keeping both feet on the ground and shuffling them away from the downed power line. (Bet you never thought knowing a dance would be part of winter-weather preparedness!)

WHAT IS CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING?

Carbon monoxide poisoning occurs after enough inhalation of carbon monoxide (CO), a toxic gas. It is very difficult for people to detect carbon monoxide because it is colorless, odorless, tasteless and, initially, non-irritating. Carbon monoxide is a product of incomplete combustion of organic matter due to insufficient oxygen supply to enable complete oxidation to carbon dioxide (CO₂). Carbon monoxide is produced by charcoal and gasoline-powered tools, heaters and cooking equipment, such as charcoal grills, barbeques and generators. Exposures at 100 parts per million or greater can be dangerous to human health.

Symptoms of mild acute poisoning include lightheadedness, confusion, headaches, vertigo and flu-like effects; larger exposures can lead to significant toxicity of the central nervous system and heart, and even death.

During prolonged power outages, the need for food and heat — if you are not prepared — can cause people to become forgetful of the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning. Use these rules to protect your family:

- Never use charcoal or gas grills as an indoor heating or cooking source. They can cause carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions when operating a generator.
- Test the operation of generators prior to a power outage and review manufacturer recommendations on connections and fueling. Set up generators outdoors and far from doors, windows and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors.
- Never use a generator inside homes, garages, crawl spaces, sheds or similar areas. Deadly levels of carbon monoxide can quickly build up in these areas and can linger for hours, even after the generator has shut off.
- Install battery-operated carbon monoxide alarms or plug-in carbon monoxide alarms with battery backup in your home, according to the manufacturer's instructions. Test batteries often.

WHEEDLE WEATHER PREPAREDNESS TIP

Plan ahead! Keep plenty of nonperishable food and water in your preparedness kit for each family member, along with warm winter clothing and extra blankets to keep you comfortable until the power returns. Don't forget personal medical needs and those who depend on you — like family pets! Detailed checklists are available at TakeWinterByStorm.org.



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SCHEDULE	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Columbus Day Storm/emergency preparedness
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Windstorms and power outages
<input type="checkbox"/>	Heavy rainstorms
<input type="checkbox"/>	Snow, ice and freezing temperatures

COMING SOON!

In next week's Take Winter By Storm issue, we'll share strategies to help you prepare for heavy rains and flooding.