



THE COUNTY OF CHESTER



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EDITORS: The following is for immediate release. If you have any questions, please contact Rebecca Brain, Communications Coordinator at 610-344-6279 or Patty Mains, Department of Emergency Services Public Information Officer at 610-344-5150.

Chester County encourages winter weather preparedness

Citizens are reminded to sign up at www.ReadyChesCo.org to receive local emergency notifications

WEST CHESTER, PA _ With this weekend's forecast for the first significant winter storm of 2016, Chester County's Department of Emergency Services (CCDES) is encouraging residents to sign up for ReadyChesCo.org - the free text and e-mail service providing local emergency notifications.

The National Weather Service, Mount Holly Weather Forecast Office issued a Winter Storm Watch for Chester County, from January 22nd at 7:00pm until January 24th at 10:00am, and Chester County may receive a large amount of snow.

Chester County Commissioners' Chair Terence Farrell said, "To keep up to date before, during and after the storm, we urge all citizens to sign up for the text and e-mail service at www.readychesco.org. This system allows your county and local municipal officials to send e-mail or text messages to cell phones, pagers or other e-mail enabled devices during an emergency."

"We also encourage everyone to watch the forecast closely, evaluate the need for travel, and make every effort to stay off the roads in the event this storm comes to fruition," added Commissioner Kathi Cozzone.

"In addition to the usual food staples, being prepared also means having enough water for your family and pets, fresh batteries for flashlights and battery operated radios, and enough prescription medicine to last you for three days." stated Commissioner Michelle Kichline.

Supplies that CCDES recommends adding to "Ready" kits, and checklists for winter weather include:

- Rock salt or other environmentally safe products to melt ice on walkways.
- Sand to improve traction.
- Snow shovels and other snow removal equipment.
- Adequate clothing and blankets to keep you warm.
- Sufficient heating fuel and/or a good supply of dry, seasoned wood for your fireplace or wood-burning stove.

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“Winter weather can be risky for people who don't take the proper precautions, and I urge everyone to take the time to check their vehicles now, before traveling,” says Robert Kagel, Director, Chester County Department of Emergency Services. “Make sure your vehicle has winter necessities like a shovel, windshield scraper, water, blankets and snack food.”

CCDES also warns of fire safety risks linked to keeping homes warm during winter storms, and recommends:

- Keep flammable items at least three feet from heat sources like radiators, space heaters, fireplaces and wood stoves.
- Plug only one heat-producing appliance (such as a space heater) into an electrical outlet.
- Ensure there are working smoke alarms on every level of your home and a properly installed and working carbon monoxide detector.

For more information visit www.chesco.org/des and follow Chester County's Department of Emergency Services online at twitter.com/CCDES or www.facebook.com/CCDES

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Chester County is the first county in Pennsylvania to initiate a strategic planning process and has a Aaa rating on its bonds from Moody's Investors Service as well as AAA ratings from Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings. Established by William Penn as one of Pennsylvania's three original counties, Chester County has been named by Forbes.com and Movoto.com as one of America's best places to raise a family and is ranked one of the healthiest counties in Pennsylvania by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.