

NEWS RELEASE

Virginia Department of Emergency Management

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Virginians should get ready for approaching severe winter weather

RICHMOND, VA – All Virginians should prepare themselves for the approaching winter storm by collecting emergency supplies, making a family communications plan and staying informed about what could happen. Eight people died during the December snowstorm, and though this storm may not cause as many power outages, it will bring dangerous conditions.

“We all should learn from the most recent disaster and be prepared for this storm,” said Michael Cline, state coordinator for the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. “Everyone should take the time now to look at their family’s specific needs and talk about what they would do in an emergency.”

The National Weather Service is predicting a winter weather system to hit Virginia on Friday and continue through Saturday. Heavy rains and strong winds hit the Commonwealth Jan. 24-25, causing flash floods in western Virginia, where residents have experienced power outages and inundated roads. Additional snow on saturated ground could cause more flooding.

All Commonwealth residents should follow these safety tips:

- Do not drive unless it is absolutely necessary. Half of the December snowstorm deaths resulted from vehicle accidents on slick roads and motorists driving too fast. If you must drive, wear a seatbelt.
- Avoid overexertion during clean up. Shoveling snow or pushing a car can bring on a heart attack or make other medical conditions worse.
- Supply your car with an emergency kit that includes water, food, a battery-powered radio, blankets, flashlight and extra batteries.

“Being prepared means getting ready to deal with severe weather no matter where you are,” said Cline.

Detailed information about preparing for any emergency is available at <http://www.ReadyVirginia.gov>.

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