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November is Winter Weather Preparedness Month

Preparedness is key to surviving Illinois winters

SPRINGFIELD, IL – The official start of winter is still nearly two months away but much of the state has already experienced its first frost and, in some areas, its first snowfall. This sets the stage for a potentially long winter so the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) is recommending people start taking steps to ensure they're prepared to stay safe and warm throughout the winter months.

Driving on snow or ice-covered roads can be extremely hazardous. Before starting a trip when the weather is bad, be sure to check road conditions on the Illinois Department of Transportation's Winter Road Conditions Map at www.gettingaroundillinois.com.

Drivers should be sure to stock their vehicles with an emergency supply kit, in the event they are stranded on the roadside and need to wait for assistance. The emergency supply kit should include:

- Blankets or sleeping bags
- A flashlight with extra batteries
- A First aid kit
- Non-perishable snack food
- Water
- Sand or cat litter
- A shovel
- Booster cables
- A cell phone charger

Winter storms also can cause power outages that can last several hours or several days. It's important to have an emergency supply kit at home that includes a battery-powered National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radio, water and non-perishable food, flashlights, extra batteries, a first aid kit and supplies for pets and family members with special medical needs.

More tips for staying safe at home and on the road are available in a guide developed by IEMA and the National Weather Service, which is available on the Ready Illinois website at www.Ready.Illinois.gov.

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