



News for Immediate Release

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Major Winter Storm Prompts Department of Health to Provide Important Safety Tips for Pennsylvanians

Harrisburg – With some areas of Pennsylvania in the crosshairs of a potentially major winter storm, the Department of Health is reminding residents to follow common-sense safety tips to help keep themselves and their loved ones safe.

“This latest winter storm is expected to hit some areas of Pennsylvania hard, with heavy, wet snow and strong winds,” Acting Secretary of Health Michael Wolf said. “These conditions can result in serious health hazards during and after the storm, including power outages, cold temperatures and snow removal dangers.”

Wolf provided the following tips:

- Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning during power outages:
 - Do not use generators, camp stoves or similar items to power your home as they can release carbon monoxide – an odorless, colorless gas that builds up in closed spaces and is poisonous to breathe.
 - Leave your home immediately and call 9-1-1 if your carbon monoxide detector sounds. Get medical help right away if you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning and are dizzy, light headed or nauseous.
- Keep as warm as possible if your power is out:
 - Hypothermia is a serious condition that happens when your body temperature is too low. Those most at risk include older Pennsylvanians and babies sleeping in cold rooms. If your power is out for a long time, stay with a relative or friend or go to a shelter.
- Prevent snow removal injuries:
 - Dress appropriately.
 - When possible, push snow instead of lifting it. If you must lift, bend your legs and not your back.
 - Avoid twisting motions that can stress your back.
 - If you experience chest pain, shortness of breath or other symptoms of a heart attack, seek immediate medical care or call 9-1-1.
 - If using a snowblower, read and follow all safety instructions.

Visit www.health.state.pa.us for more winter weather safety information.

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