

Extreme cold temperatures can create additional issues for vulnerable populations

like the elderly and citizens who live in homes that have poor insulation and/or that have inadequate heating systems, the homeless or those with medical issues. Please make alternative plans for housing if they meet any of the situations mentioned above.

Cold Weather Tips:

1. Create a warm room in your house by closing off any un-used rooms. Close off registers and use a blanket or towel to create a seal at the bottom of doors.
2. Dress warmly. A hat is your number one friend at a time like this. A large percentage of body heat loss occurs in the head region, so it is crucial to keep your head covered. You should wear slippers or socks. Dress in layers, especially with wool or cotton clothing. Don't wear your winter coat or you will have nothing else to put on when you go outside. When you are sitting still put on a blanket.
3. Cook. Steam will raise the moisture level in your home, making you feel warmer. While you are at it, you may wish to make a soup or a stew in that boiling pot. Make cookies or a pie, too, as your oven will help to heat the kitchen. The kitchen will be warm while you are cooking, and then you can eat the warm food.
4. Drink warm beverages. Make a cup of tea or coffee. Sip some warm broth.
5. Find a pet or friend to snuggle with. The living body of any warm-blooded being is a furnace unto itself.
6. Be active. Moving around produces body heat!
7. Use a hot water bottle. Great for warming your hands & lap while sitting; also put it under the covers at the foot of the bed.
8. Turn on the lights. Incandescent and halogen bulbs create light through heat and can significantly increase temperatures in a room.
9. If you can afford it, leave other heat-producing appliances on, such as computers/monitors or strong lamps.

Warnings:

1. Be sure to remove any home-made or store bought "pillow" style heating pads from the bed before falling asleep. They retain heat for a long period of time and if left too often in one spot, they can heat feather blankets or mattress covers to a dangerous degree and cause fires.
2. Don't start any kind of fire or use your stove to stay warm.
3. Don't overload electrical receptors when using space heaters.
4. Be aware that the more you seal off air circulation to the outside, you increase the possibility of a dangerous buildup of carbon monoxide in the air -- especially if you use natural gas or propane in the home. Be sure to install a carbon monoxide detector if you don't have one already. If you do, be sure to test it on a regular basis.

Source: The Lee County VOAD (Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster) Team