



RIEMA

RHODE ISLAND
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Gina M. Raimondo **Governor**
Peter T. Gaynor **Director**

RIEMA Urges Rhode Islanders to Prepare for Upcoming Winter Storm & Severe Cold Temperatures

Contact:

Alex Ambrosius

RIEMA External Affairs

(401) 261-1639

www.riema.ri.gov

Cranston, RI- The National Weather Service has issued a Winter Storm Watch for all of Rhode Island to be in effect Saturday afternoon, February 14, through Sunday evening, February 15. A Winter Storm Watch is issued for the potential accumulation of 6 or more inches of snow in a 12 hour period, or 8 or more inches of snow in a 24 hour period. Some areas of Rhode Island may receive up to a foot of snow.

Strong northerly winds of 25-30 mph, with gusts up to 40 mph in some areas, are projected to sweep through the region Sunday afternoon into the evening. These strong winds, combined with snow accumulations, could create blizzard-like conditions and reduce visibility. Anyone traveling in the next 24-36 hours should monitor later forecasts and be prepared to modify travel plans. Power outages could also pose as a potential issue throughout the duration of this winter storm event.

“We are New Englanders and we will continue to do everything we can to be prepared as more winter weather comes our way, but I urge you to please take caution on the roads this weekend,” Governor Gina Raimondo said. “We are expecting potentially dangerous conditions outside, and Rhode Islanders should stay inside and off the roads if possible. Please check on your neighbors and loved ones and make sure they have everything they need to stay safe and warm.”

Base temperatures will be in the teens Saturday into Sunday, and are expected to drop below zero Sunday night into Monday. Wind chill factors will cause the temperatures to fall 10 to 20 degrees below zero from Sunday into Monday.

“Rhode Islanders are urged to remain inside during periods of extreme cold,” said Peter Gaynor, Director of the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency. “If you must venture outside during periods of severe cold weather, dress for the conditions by limiting the exposure of bare skin to the cold. Wear proper hats and gloves, cover your face and neck, and dress in warm layers.”

It is important to remember that house fires occur more frequently in the winter due to a lack of proper safety precautions when using alternate heating sources, such as unattended fires and space heaters. To prevent a dangerous fire from occurring this winter, consider the following precautionary tips:

- Place space heaters at least three feet away from anything combustible (i.e. wallpaper, bedding, clothing, etc.)
- Never leave space heaters operating when you are not in the room or when you go to bed. Do not leave children unattended near space heaters.
- Refrain from drying wet clothing over a space heater.
- Make sure smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms are working properly and replace batteries as necessary.
- Use a fireplace screen when burning fires and burn only wood. NEVER burn paper or plastic.

“Make sure that you have sufficient heating fuel as these next few days are going to be very cold,” Said Director Gaynor. “If you experience a loss of your heating source and need emergency heating, contact your local municipalities or dial 2-1-1. If your power goes out, call National Grid at 1-800-465-1212. For all other emergencies, such as a house fire or an injury, dial 9-1-1.”

For more information and for tips on preparing for the extreme cold follow RIEMA on Twitter [@RhodeIslandEMA](https://twitter.com/RhodeIslandEMA) and visit the RIEMA website at www.riema.ri.gov.

###

