



Louisa County Department of Fire & EMS

The Louisa County Department of Fire and EMS would like to wish everyone a Safe and Happy Holiday Season.

Some winter safety considerations for protecting yourself, your family and your home:

- ✓ Replace the batteries in your smoke/carbon monoxide detectors.
- ✓ If you heat with a fireplace or wood stove: Have a professional check it, especially if it has been a long time since the last cleaning. Residue (creosote) can build up and cause chimney fires which may extend into other areas of your home. When cleaning out your wood stove or fire place, place all ashes/coins into a metal container, wet down, and then place outside away from other combustibles.
- ✓ Space heaters: Never plug them into extension cords; plug into wall outlets. Keep space heaters at least three feet from other objects, and turn it off before going to bed.
- ✓ Safe use of Kerosene Heaters: Keep kerosene heaters at least three feet away from other objects. Make sure there is adequate ventilation to avoid cumulative CO (Carbon Monoxide) concentrations. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless, and tasteless gas that is slightly lighter than air. It is toxic to humans and animals when encountered in higher concentrations.
- ✓ Avoid using your oven or any other type of appliances as a heating source.
- ✓ Don't use candles during power outages: Many home fires in winter are caused by candles. Flashlights are much safer. Be sure to have plenty of extra batteries.
- ✓ Stay informed during power outages. Be sure you have a battery-powered and/or hand-crank radio (and extra batteries). Get one with the NOAA Weather Radio band so you can hear winter weather reports directly from the National Weather Service as well as local radio stations. These are available at electronics, discount and sporting goods stores, and online from many retail outlets. Models are available for those with special needs.
- ✓ Get where you need to be before the weather gets bad. It's always best to stay off roads during winter storms. Most traffic crashes happen within the first two hours after a storm starts. Get road conditions by calling 511 or visiting www.511Virginia.org.
- ✓ Make a vehicle break down emergency kit just in case you get trapped in bad weather. Some suggested items to include are: blankets, bottled water/food, tire chains, extra cell phone battery or charger, Basic First Aid Kit

Most importantly: You need a family emergency plan. If your family cannot return home because of severe weather or closed roads, you need to decide now on where you will meet to reunite. You also need an out-of-town relative or friend to be your family emergency contact. Additionally, every home should have a Fire Escape Plan. Learn more about making a plan for winter weather and all emergencies – and get a free family emergency plan worksheet – at www.ReadyVirginia.gov.

For any questions, concerns, or assistance please contact the Louisa County Fire and EMS Administrative office at (540) 967-3491. The office is located at 1 Woolfolk Ave., Louisa, Virginia 23093