



Be Winter-Ready

Helping make you, your home and your business more resilient and prepared for severe weather



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

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Introduction

This revised edition of our Be Winter Ready Booklet has been prepared as part of the Government of Ireland initiative to assist households in preparing for winter.

We need to prepare for the winter, including possible severe weather events. By taking some simple steps we can all reduce the impact of such events and cope with them when they actually happen.

While we get winter ready, remember, even when fully vaccinated, to wash your hands regularly, wear face coverings as required and follow proper sneeze/cough etiquette.

We have included in this booklet contact details for organisations and agencies that can provide further guidance and assistance. The booklet is published by the Office of Emergency Planning on behalf of the Government Task Force on Emergency Planning.

We have a lot more information and useful links on our website, www.winterready.ie

Tá leagan Gaeilge den leabhrán seo ar fáil freisin.

Our main message during the winter months is simple, - Be Prepared, Stay Safe and know where to find help should you need it.

Health Preparedness



As we come into the winter months, COVID-19, influenza and other respiratory viruses will circulate at increased levels within our communities. Influenza and other respiratory viruses have similar symptoms to COVID-19 and all spread from one person to another. COVID-19, colds and flu are caused by viruses, so they aren't usually treated with antibiotics.

COVID-19

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 (coronavirus) are:

- Fever (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above) including having chills.
- Dry cough.
- Fatigue (tiredness).

COVID-19 symptoms can be like symptoms of cold, flu or hay fever. You may not have all of the symptoms or your symptoms may be mild.

Less common symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this could mean they're completely gone or just different to normal.
- Nasal congestion (runny or blocked nose).
- Conjunctivitis (also known as red eye or pink eye).
- Sore throat.
- Headache.
- Muscle or joint pain (aches and pains).
- Different types of skin rash.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Diarrhoea.
- Chills or dizziness.



It can be difficult to tell the symptoms of flu apart from the symptoms of COVID-19. If you develop these symptoms you need to self-isolate (stay at home and avoid contact with others) and contact your GP by phone if you feel very unwell or are at high risk from COVID-19. Your GP will advise you if you need to be tested for COVID-19. For more information see www.hse.ie

Symptoms of severe COVID-19 include:

- Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.
- Loss of appetite.
- Confusion.
- Pain or pressure in the chest.
- Fever (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above).

Protect yourself and others from COVID-19

If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 and feel unwell, you should:

- Stay at home until 48 hours after your symptoms are mostly or fully gone.
- Avoid contact with other people, especially people at higher risk from COVID-19

You do not need a COVID-19 test unless a GP or health professional tells you to. If you choose to do one, there is different advice to follow if you have a positive COVID-19 test.

Non-urgent advice: Phone your GP if you have symptoms of COVID-19 and you:

- Feel very unwell and are concerned about your symptoms.
- Are at high risk from COVID-19.

Do not go to your GP or to a pharmacy in person.

Prevent the spread of COVID-19

There are things you can do to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Do

- Wash your hands properly and often.
- Cover coughs or sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve - put used tissues into a bin and wash your hands.
- Check that visitors to your home or workplace do not have symptoms of COVID-19, colds or flu.
- Let fresh air into your home by opening windows, doors and air vents as much as possible.
- Clean objects and surfaces that other people touch.

Don't

- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.
- Do not share objects that touch your mouth, for example, bottles or cups.
- Do not shake hands or make close contact with other people, if possible.
- Do not wear disposable gloves instead of washing your hands - your hands can get contaminated when you take them off.

COLDS

Symptoms of a cold include sore throat, sneezing, blocked or runny nose, cough and feeling unwell. While you have a cold you should drink plenty of liquids, get lots of rest at home and eat healthily. A cold usually comes on gradually and most adults will start to feel better after 3 or 4 days and be fully recovered by 7 days, although young children may take a little longer to fully recover.

FLU

Influenza (flu) is a virus that comes on suddenly and makes you feel unwell. Symptoms of flu include fever, muscle aches, cough and tiredness which develop quickly, along with feeling very unwell. Most people start to feel better after 5 to 8 days although a cough and general tiredness may last for 2 to 3 weeks.

Usually you do not need to see the doctor, as most flu can be treated at home by drinking plenty of liquids, getting lots of rest and eating healthily. People with flu are usually infectious a day before symptoms start and remain infectious for 5 or 6 days. If you have the flu, stay at home and try to avoid all unnecessary contact with others during this time to avoid spreading the illness to them.

Discourage any visitors. You can avoid spreading the flu germs by coughing and sneezing into a tissue, binning the tissue immediately and washing your hands with soap and water afterwards. Alcohol based hand gels are also effective. If you don't have a tissue you can cough or sneeze into the inside of your elbow.

Some people are at risk of complications of flu, like pneumonia, which may mean admission to hospital. People at risk include:

- Those 60 years and older.
- Children, especially younger children.
- Pregnant women.
- Residents of nursing homes and other residential care facilities.
- Those with chronic illness, like heart disease, lung disease, diabetes and cancer.
- People with Down syndrome.

If you are in one of these risk categories, you should contact your Doctor about getting the free flu vaccine. If you are in one of these at risk categories and you get flu you should contact your doctor by telephone, as you may need special anti-viral medicines. These work best if started within 48 hours of the start of flu symptoms.



Visit www.immunisation.ie for more information about the flu and pneumococcal vaccines and follow [@hseimm](https://twitter.com/hseimm) on X and Instagram.

VACCINATION

Influenza (flu) is a very infectious illness caused by the influenza virus that affects the lungs and the airways. It can be severe and cause complications like pneumonia and bronchitis. These can lead to serious illness and death. Flu is more severe in people aged 60 years and over, young children, pregnant women, and people with certain long-term medical conditions that put them at higher risk from flu. Flu vaccination can prevent flu. The flu vaccine is strongly recommended for:

- People aged 60 years and over.
- Pregnant women.
- Children and young people aged 2 to 17 years.
- People with certain long-term medical conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, liver, kidney disease, cancer, chronic lung disease including COPD, or neurological diseases.
- People whose immune system is impaired due to disease or treatment including cancer patients.
- Persons who are obese who have a body mass index (BMI) of over 40.
- People with Down syndrome.
- Residents of nursing homes and other long-stay institutions.
- Carers and household contacts of people at medical risk of the complications of flu.

- People with regular close contact with poultry, water fowl or pigs.
- Healthcare workers.

NIAC has recently issued its 2024 Autumn COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendations for administration to the following cohorts:

- Those aged 60 years and older
- Those aged 6 months-59 years with immunocompromise associated with a suboptimal response to vaccination
- Those aged 6 months-59 years with medical conditions associated with a higher risk of COVID-19 hospitalisation, severe disease or death
- Those aged 18-59 years living in long term care facilities for older adults
- Health and care workers

Flu and COVID-19 can both cause serious illness. The COVID-19 vaccine does not protect against the flu. This is because flu and COVID-19 are caused by different viruses. It is important to get both the flu vaccine and the COVID-19 vaccine. If you are offered a COVID-19 booster vaccine at the same time as your flu vaccine they can be given at the same time.

BE WINTER-READY

Ask your GP, practice nurse or pharmacist for your free flu vaccine. If you are 60 or older or have a long-term medical condition, you should also ask your GP (doctor), practice nurse or pharmacist about the pneumococcal vaccine, which protects against pneumonia. Most people only need to get the pneumococcal vaccine once. You can get this vaccine on the same day as the flu vaccine from your GP.

MIND YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Taking care of our mental health and being there for others is important as we face into the winter months.

Many of us experience mental health difficulties such as ongoing stress, anxiety, low mood or trouble sleeping

When we're not feeling ourselves, it can be hard to connect the signs. If you're worried about your mental health you can talk to your GP. They can offer support and provide information on supports that can help.

You can find more information and support that can help at www.yourmentalhealth.ie. The website provides information and signposting on all mental health supports and services that are available nationally and locally provided by the HSE and its funded partners. You can also call the freephone, YourMentalHealth Information Line to find supports and services 1800 111 888 (any time, day or night).



Visit yourmentalhealth.ie for updated factual information and advice on mental health and services and supports.

You can call the Information line on 1800 111 888 any time, day or night.

SAMARITANS

Samaritans services are available 24 hours a day, for confidential, non-judgmental support.

- Freephone 116 123
- Email jo@samaritans.ie
- Visit www.samaritans.ie for more information

Met Éireann



To be Winter-Ready, you need to be aware of the weather conditions in your area, so that you can **prepare**.

WEATHER FORECASTS

Met Éireann weather forecasts are available on **RTÉ** (radio and TV), on the independent local and national radio stations and on www.met.ie and the **Met Éireann app**. Along with updates and extra climate information on our social media channels – **X**, **Facebook** and **Instagram**.

In general, warnings will not be issued more than 60-hours ahead of the expected adverse weather but advisories on potential hazards are issued up to a week in advance. Impacts from wind/rain/snow etc. vary depending on location, recent weather conditions, the state of ground, the time of year as well as the duration of the event. In particular, the timing and location of the occurrence of extreme weather can significantly affect the impact which extreme weather may have on society, or on the economy.



REMEMBER

During severe weather, stay well back from exposed coastal areas (e.g. coastal cliffs, piers and beaches, etc.) and do not put yourself in a dangerous position near breaking waves.

More information at www.safetyonthewater.gov.ie

“STAY BACK, STAY HIGH AND STAY DRY”

WEATHER WARNINGS

Met Éireann Weather Warnings are presented in three categories:

STATUS YELLOW

Be Aware

Weather that does not pose a threat to the general population but is potentially dangerous on a localised scale.

Be aware about meteorological conditions and check if you are exposed to danger by nature of your activity or your specific location. Do not take any avoidable risks.

Yellow level weather alerts are to notify those who are at risk because of their location and/or activity, and to allow them to take preventative action.

STATUS ORANGE

Weather Warning – Be Prepared

Infrequent and dangerous weather conditions which may pose a threat to life and property.

Prepare yourself in an appropriate way depending on location and activity. All people and property in the affected areas can be significantly impacted.

Check your activity/event and delay or cancel as appropriate.



Download the Severe Weather Chart at www.met.ie/weather-warnings and pin up in your classroom, home or workplace.

SEVERE WEATHER CHART



Status Yellow

Potentially dangerous on a localised scale.



Status Orange

Infrequent and dangerous weather conditions which may pose a threat.



Status Red

Rare and very dangerous weather conditions.

STATUS RED

Severe Weather Warning – Take Action

Rare and very dangerous weather conditions from intense meteorological phenomena.

Take action to protect yourself and your property.

Follow instructions and advice given by the authorities under all circumstances and be prepared for exceptional measures.

The Home in Winter



BE PREPARED

- Have a small supply of non perishable, easy-to-prepare foods.
- Keep extra supplies of essential medication in case it is difficult to get to the doctor/pharmacy.
- Have an adequate supply of fuel for heating/cooking and, if possible, a suitable alternative should the main supply fail.
- Know how to turn off your water supply.
- Have a water container to ensure a supply of drinking water.
- Have batteries for torches and alternative light sources in the event of power cuts.
- Keep mobile phones charged up - have local emergency numbers in your phone.
- Have a suitable snow shovel (but any shovel or spade will do).
- Know your EIRCODE



Visit <https://finder.eircode.ie/#/> to find or check your Eircode.

ARE YOU READY FOR SNOW AND FREEZING CONDITIONS?

- Snow clearing is strenuous—do not attempt it unless you have a reasonable standard of fitness and do not have an underlying medical condition. Wear suitable clothing and boots or shoes with a good grip.
- Clear the snow earlier in the day - do not use boiling water as it may freeze over and cause a hazard.

BE PREPARED - PREVENT PIPES FREEZING AND PROTECT YOUR WATER SUPPLY

- **Insulate water tanks and pipes**
Protect exposed pipes, including attic pipes, from freezing and cracking with lagging or by wrapping a towel around them.
- **Service your boiler**
Your boiler needs to be serviced regularly by an accredited plumber to run efficiently and to keep your home or business warm. If not, leaks could freeze and cause a breakdown and costly repairs.

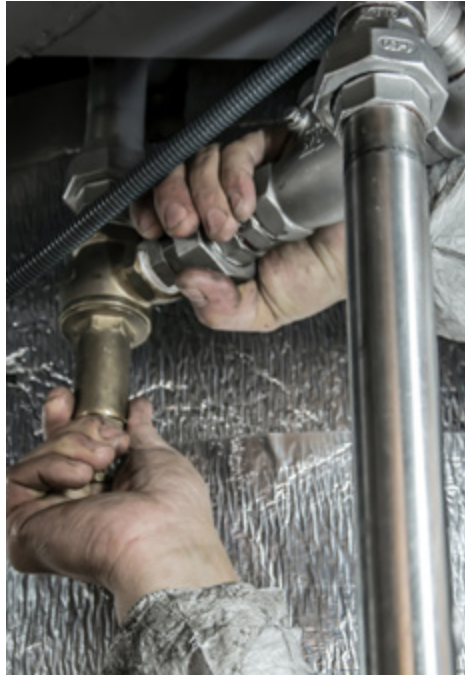
- **Keep your home warm**
Minimising all draughts, leaving heating on low for long periods and opening doors to allow warm air to circulate to unheated areas of your house will help prevent pipes and tanks from freezing in the cold weather.
- **Fix external dripping taps**
It is recommended you always fix any dripping taps but pay particular attention to external dripping taps in winter as water from them can freeze on the ground and can cause people to slip and injure themselves.
- **Unattended Property**
If you are leaving your property unattended for a period of more than a day or two, you should shut off the water supply to the property from the external stopcock (while ensuring that any water-dependent appliances or facilities are also shutoff).
- **Running your taps will not prevent pipes from freezing**
This is especially important as this can cause frozen drains and puts undue pressure on supplies across the network.

FROZEN MAINS WATER SUPPLY

- If your supply is frozen, be cautious with the use of heating systems, washing machines or other water-dependent appliances or facilities.
- If in doubt, contact a qualified plumber for advice.

WATER LEAKS

- Water supply in vacant premises and holiday homes should be shut off and drained down in preparation for winter.
- Key holders should check premises regularly for possible leaks.
- If a leak is detected:
 - Turn off water supply – stop valve is usually under the kitchen sink.
 - Turn on cold taps to drain the system.
 - Turn off central heating.
 - Turn off electricity supply at main fuse board if leak is near electrical appliances.
 - Call a qualified plumber and/ or electrician.



For more information on how to protect your water supply during the winter see www.water.ie/support/winter-proofing/

Advice for Older People and their Families and Neighbours

In winter it can be difficult for everyone to get about and conduct day to day activities. It is even more difficult for older and other vulnerable people.

ADVICE FOR OLDER PEOPLE OR INFIRM

Keeping Well and Warm

- Keep warm, eat well and avoid unnecessary travel. You should eat regular hot meals and drink plenty of fluids, this will keep you warm and will give you energy to keep active.
- Ensure you have sufficient supplies of food and of any prescription medicine you may need. Keep active indoors.
- Have sufficient fuel supplies to maintain adequate heating in your home.
- Ask your relatives and neighbours for help if you need it. Keep their phone numbers on a list beside your phone.

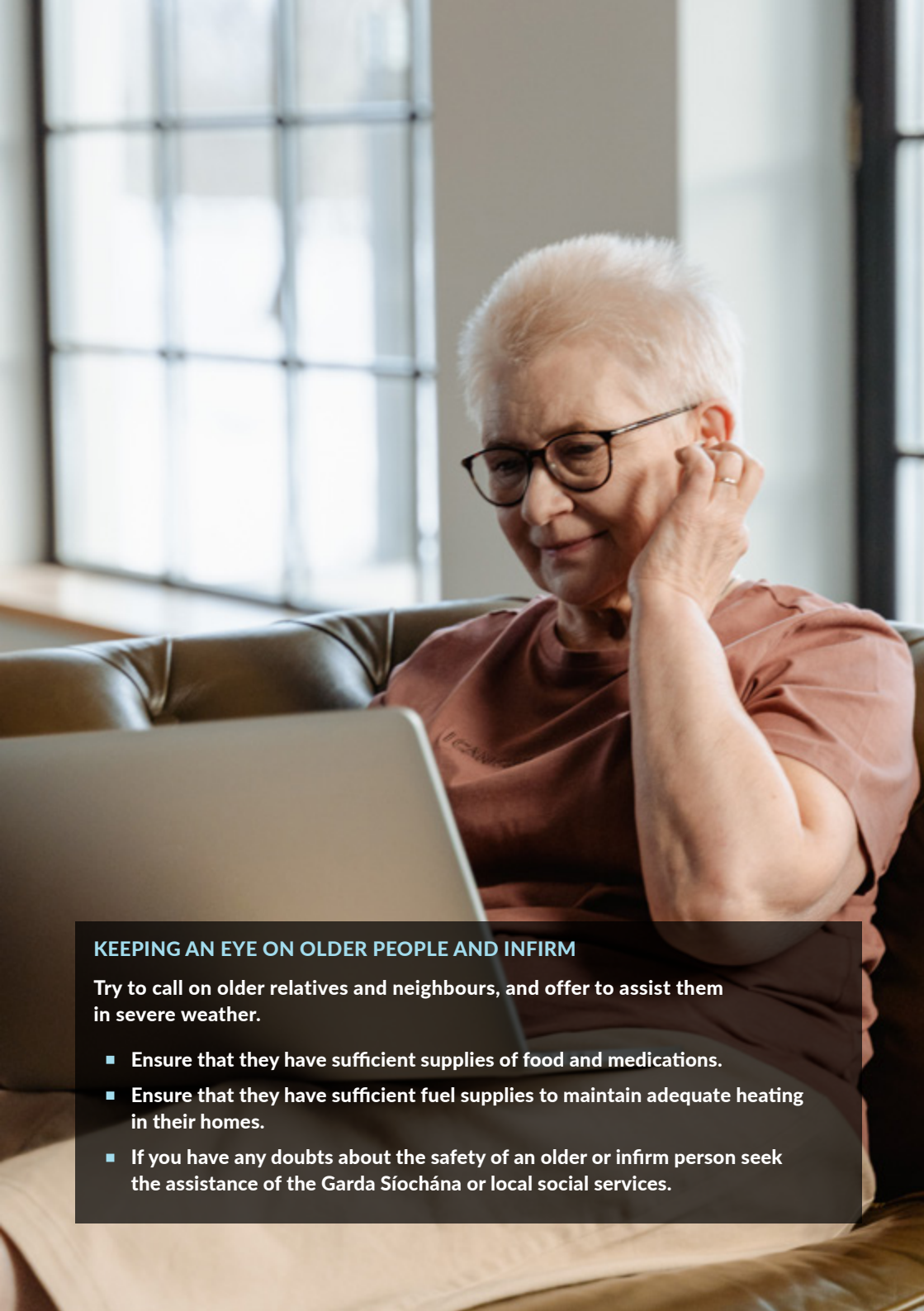
Personal Safety – Staying Safe

- In icy weather, wear well-fitted shoes with non-slip soles if you have to go out but try to limit walking outside during the cold weather.
- Consider wearing a personal alarm so that family or neighbours are alerted if you fall.
- If you have a fall, even a minor one, make sure you visit your doctor for a check up.

Fall prevention in your home

- Leave a low energy light on at night time, preferably one with a highlight output.
- Use a non-slip shower or bath mat.
- Make sure wires or cords from lamps, telephones etc. do not trail where you walk.
- Arrange furniture so that you can easily move around all your rooms.
- Remove rugs or use non-slip tape or backing so rugs will not slip.
- Consider installing hand rails on both sides of the stairs.

Keep safe this winter.



KEEPING AN EYE ON OLDER PEOPLE AND INFIRM

Try to call on older relatives and neighbours, and offer to assist them in severe weather.

- **Ensure that they have sufficient supplies of food and medications.**
- **Ensure that they have sufficient fuel supplies to maintain adequate heating in their homes.**
- **If you have any doubts about the safety of an older or infirm person seek the assistance of the Garda Síochána or local social services.**

People with Disabilities



This is advice that could apply to anyone, however, it contains certain, extra elements that may be relevant to persons with disabilities. If possible, make yourself aware of a relative or neighbour's disability and ask them how best you can help them, if required. Arrange regular visits or phone calls at times of severe weather.

KEEPING WELL AND WARM

- If your disability is affected by a drop in temperature try and be aware of the weather forecast in order to allow you plan for pain management.
- Wear the correct amount of layers to try and maintain your body temperature at the required level.
- Individuals with reduced mobility should take extra measures to protect their hands, feet and other areas of the body that are particularly subject to cold.
- Eat well and avoid unnecessary travel. You should eat regular hot meals and drink plenty of fluids, this will keep you warm and will give you energy to keep active.
- Ensure you have sufficient supplies of food and of any prescription medicine you may need. If you have some mobility try and keep active indoors.
- Have sufficient fuel supplies to maintain adequate heating in your home.
- Ask your relatives and neighbours for help if you need it. Keep their phone numbers on a list or saved onto your phone.
- Ensure that you are on the vulnerable customer registers for the energy companies and Irish Water.

- If you cannot talk to people on the phone, make sure you have a relative or friend you can text for assistance if you need it, and register with the emergency services so you can contact them via text if necessary.
- If you have to use medical equipment or a powered mobility device every day please make sure that you always have access to a power supply.
- If you have an assistance dog, be sure to keep them warm as well. Be sure to always have a blanket for the animal to rest on. Keep the animal indoors as much as possible.
- Consider wearing a personal alarm so that family or neighbours are alerted if you fall.
- If you have a fall, even a minor one, make sure you visit your doctor for a check up.

KEEPING AN EYE ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

PERSONAL SAFETY – STAYING SAFE

- Plan for the possibility that winter weather may disrupt your home-care service.
- In icy weather, wear well-fitted shoes with non-slip soles if you have to go out but try to limit walking outside during the cold weather.
- If you use a mobility device make sure it can grip an icy surface.
- If you have a mobile phone that you can use make sure it has a charge and bring it with you when you are going out.
- If you have a ramp make sure it is well gritted in icy weather.
- If possible, make yourself aware of a relative or neighbour's disability and ask them how best you can help them, if required.
- Try to call on relatives and neighbours who have a disability, and offer to assist them in severe weather.
- Ensure that they have sufficient supplies of food and medications
- Ensure that they have sufficient fuel supplies to maintain adequate heating in their homes.
- Ensure that they have access to power and water.
- Try to arrange regular visits or phone calls so they don't feel isolated.
- If you have any doubts about the safety of someone you know who has a disability seek the assistance of An Garda Síochána or local health and social services.

Flooding



In the event of a flood, the local authorities and emergency services will provide the principal response at a local level. **Always cooperate with their instructions.** Individuals and communities can also play an important role in reducing the impact of flooding by being aware of flood risks and by taking the time to prepare in advance.

ADVANCE PLANNING

Find out if you live in an area at risk of flooding by:

- Speaking to neighbours and your local authority.
- Consulting the OPW flood maps, which show areas that may be at risk of flooding (See www.floodinfo.ie).

If you do live in an area at risk of flooding, you may be able to lessen the impact of a flood by taking the time to prepare in advance:

- Make a flood plan for your family or business so that everyone knows what to do and where to go in the event of a flood.
- Make up a flood kit and ensure that everyone knows where to find it.
- Check if you have flood insurance and consider if there are any physical improvements that you could make to your property to reduce the impact of flood damage.



OPW has a dedicated website, www.flooding.ie, which provides information to the public to help them to plan and prepare to protect their homes, businesses and farms in the event of a flood.

BE PREPARED

A typical **flood plan** for your home should include:

- Emergency numbers – have a print-out and store a copy on your phone.
- List of most valuable possessions – know where they are so that you can move them quickly to safety.
- Store valuable documents in a water-tight container – passports, birth certificates, insurance policy, etc.
- Gas and electricity – know where the shut off points are.
- Have a prearranged place that you can safely move your car to, if you have time.
- Have medication to hand (if needed).

A **flood kit** should include a torch, some warm and waterproof clothes, a battery or wind-up radio, a charged mobile phone, rubber gloves, rubber boots, a first aid kit, blankets and children's essentials, if required.

Practice your flood plan. Ensure that everyone knows what has to be done and what is safe.

A FLOOD EVENT

You should check local news and weather forecasts and heed all weather warnings issued. Be prepared to put into action any plans you have made to deal with flooding in your area including:

Inside and Outside

- Turn off gas and electricity.
- Move valuables and other items to safety above the flood level or upstairs, if possible.
- Disconnect washing machines and dishwashers.
- Move vehicles to high ground, if possible.
- Remember, flood water could get into your garage – keep any chemicals or fuel in watertight containers and, if possible, move to above flood level to ensure that they do not spill into the flood water and cause an additional hazard.
- Close off the flow valves on propane tanks, oil drums, or other fuel containers that supply your home through pipes and fittings.
- Unplug any exterior electrical connections such as outdoor lighting, pond pumps and filters, if safe to do so.



See www.flooding.ie for further guidance.

- Move livestock and pets to a safe location.
- Note the location of any manholes or service chambers and keep clear of these during a flood, as their covers may be dislodged.

Evacuation

Despite all precautions, it may still be necessary to evacuate your home or business.

Always cooperate with instructions from emergency services and local authorities.

AFTER A FLOOD

- Always be careful when re-entering your property after a flood as there may be structural damage or contamination as a result of floodwater.
- The Health Service Executive provides health advice for flood events at www.hse.ie.
- Have any electric, gas or fuel-based service checked by a professional before re-entering your property after a flood.
- Photograph or video any damage caused and check what is covered by your insurance policy.

GENERAL SAFETY ADVICE

- If possible, avoid contact with flood water as it may be contaminated or polluted.
- Don't try to walk, cycle or drive through flooded areas.
- If you have to leave your vehicle, be wary of strong currents and debris.
- Take care if you have to walk through shallow water – manhole covers may have come off and there may be other underwater hazards that you cannot see.
- Never try to swim through fast-flowing water – you may get swept away or struck by an object in the water.
- Keep away from sea and flood defences and fast moving water.
- Owners of high axle vehicles such as trucks or tractors might be asked for help in getting through flooded areas.



REMEMBER

As little as 150mm of fast-flowing water can knock you off your feet and 300mm of fast-flowing water can move most cars off the road.

Military Ranges



MILITARY FIRING RANGES - WARNING

If you are hill walking in the countryside please watch out for the special signs indicating Military Range Lands. Do not walk onto these ranges as you could be in **GREAT DANGER** at all times from unexploded shells and other dangerous ammunition.

RED FLAGS or **RED LIGHTS FLASHING** indicate **LIVE FIRING.**

Walkers are advised to remain on designated walking routes at all times.

If you are visiting the Glen of Imaal, Co Wicklow, you can get further information, including free maps of the area, by contacting:

**Army Range Warden Service,
Seskin School, Glen of Imaal
Tel: (045) 404653**



REMEMBER

Watch out for the Warning Signs and
TAKE CARE!

Road Safety



You should get your vehicle serviced before winter sets in to make sure it is ready for the conditions which will undoubtedly arrive when least expected!

IS YOUR VEHICLE WINTER-READY?

There are some things you can do yourself:

- **Lights** - Make sure all your indicators and headlamps are clean and working.
- **Liquids** - Make sure the water reservoir is up to the maximum mark and correctly mixed with anti-freeze. You may also need to top up your coolant and screen wash.
- **Oil** - Check your dipstick and top up the oil if necessary. Look for signs of leakages on the ground under the car.
- **Electrics** - Check your dashboard before and after starting the engine. Listen for a weak battery and replace, if necessary.
- **Windscreen wipers** - you should clean them regularly and replace them every 12 months.
- **Safety Assist** - Check your vehicle's owner's manual and find out if it has any safety assist technology e.g. Advanced Braking System (ABS)



REMINDER: TYRES - YOURS CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

Your tyres are the only contact your vehicle has with the road. Check your tyre treads and pressure, including the spare tyre. While the minimum legal limit is 1.6mm for a car (1mm for motorcycles), a minimum tread of 3mm is advised for winter driving.

The RSA always recommends that tyres are changed before they reach their minimum tread depth.



BE PREPARED - EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT TO HAVE IN YOUR CAR

- High Visibility Vest.
- A hazard warning triangle.
- A torch with charged batteries - check it monthly.
- Always carry spare fuses and bulbs (for your vehicles lights and electrics).
- De-icing equipment (such as an ice-scraper or de-icing spray for windscreen and locks).
- First aid kit.
- A Map or GPS (charged).
- Appropriate clothing and footwear in case you have to leave your vehicle.
- Have a charged mobile phone so you can call for help or locate the EIRCODE for your location.
- Some drink and food supplies to sustain yourself and passengers.





All travel should be considered in line with current Government guidance.

PLANNING A JOURNEY IN WINTER

Do you really have to travel by car?

You could:

- Consider delaying your trip until the weather and road conditions improve.
- Use public transport where available.

If you **MUST** travel by road, be prepared for severe conditions

- Ensure your vehicle has a more than adequate supply of fuel for the journey. If possible, keep your fuel tank full in winter.
- Check your vehicles emergency equipment before you leave.
- Allow extra time and drive with caution. Let someone know your route and when you expect to arrive.
- Check to see if there are any problems on your intended route before you leave. Information is available from Transport Infrastructure Ireland, website traffic.tii.ie and you can follow them on X [@TIITraffic](https://twitter.com/TIITraffic).
- Check An Garda Síochána website www.garda.ie or on X [@GardaTraffic](https://twitter.com/GardaTraffic)
- Check the weather forecast at www.met.ie and pay attention to weather warnings. Listen to Local radio for updated bulletins from your Local Authority. Remember that the best road conditions are likely to occur between 10am and 4pm.
- If you do not know your route and are using a SatNav/GPS map, be sure it does not pre-select a dangerous route which brings you across mountainous terrain or along narrow back-roads, which may be hazardous due to snow and ice. e.g. Sally Gap, Co Wicklow or Barnesmore Gap, Co Donegal. Do not rely totally on a SatNav/GPS, look at your route on a map.
- Follow the Advice from the **Road Safety Authority (RSA)** on www.rsa.ie. More detailed advice on using the roads in Severe Weather can be found on the **Severe Weather Advice** area of the RSA website.

BE WINTER-READY



DRIVING SAFELY IN HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS

- Drivers should ensure to slow down in all severe weather conditions.
 - Information about road conditions, Incidents and other Traffic related information is available on the TII Traffic Website traffic.tii.ie.
 - If your business operates company-owned vehicles, or you drive as part of your job, please see Driving for Work advice here: www.hsa.ie/eng/vehicles_at_work/driving_for_work/.
- Remember the following serious hazards:
- In **strong winds**, beware of fallen trees or other debris and high sided vehicles, particularly when overtaking. If you are driving a high sided vehicle, try to anticipate exposed sections of roadway where winds will be stronger.
 - If you encounter **fog** while driving, turn on your fog lights but remember to turn them off once the fog clears.
 - **Sun glare** can dazzle drivers. To minimise risk, reduce your speed and clean your windscreen inside and out and keep a set of sun-glasses in your vehicle.

HAIL SHOWERS – MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO INJURIES AND FATALITIES



SUDDEN HAIL SHOWER ON THE N11 IN APRIL 2016

Hail events can occur at any location even outside of winter months.



- Never drive through **flooded roads**. The water could be deeper than you think. Find an alternative route.
- **Snow and ice** will always be worse in mountainous areas and higher ground try to reroute around such places. Fully remove snow and ice from the roof of your vehicle before you depart.
- Always heed Garda or local authority road signs advising of a road closure or detour.
- Leaving your vehicle is dangerous, wear a high visibility jacket and use your hazard lights to enable other traffic to avoid collision with your vehicle. Never stop on a motorway, only in the case of an emergency. If you have no alternative it is safer to get out of your car and stand behind the safety barrier. Call for assistance immediately.
- Be aware of weather forecasts indicating the possibility of hail
- Hail is probably the greatest winter hazard for the driver: even if the road is salted hail will stay on the road.
- If you do encounter hailstones, reduce your speed. Do not brake if possible, as hail showers can leave a narrow band of ball-bearing sized hailstones on the road.

Be Aware – Vulnerable Road Users

DURING SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS DRIVERS SHOULD:

- Remember to look out for vulnerable road users such as: Pedestrians, Cyclists, Motorcyclists, horse riders and those with reduced mobility.
- Slow down and give pedestrians and those who cycle more space when over-taking. They may need to avoid an obstacle in the road, may skid in ice and snowy conditions or may get blown off course depending on the weather conditions.

ADVICE TO VULNERABLE ROAD USERS IN SEVERE WEATHER :

Don't take chances: During periods of severe weather consider postponing your journey.

- **Be prepared:** Carry a torch in snowy conditions and wear clothing that does not restrict your vision and wear appropriate footwear.

- **Be Alert:** Walk on the right-hand side of the road, facing traffic if there are no footpaths.
- **Take Care:** Be careful when crossing the road or cycling in extremely windy conditions and walk on a footpath, where possible and not in the street.
- **If walking:** be careful when crossing the road. Use pedestrian crossings where available. Use a footpath where one is available. If there is no footpath, walk on the right-hand side of the road, facing traffic and do not walk in the street.
- **If Cycling:** People who cycle should ensure that they and their bike are visible to other road users by investing in a good set of front and rear lights. Take care in windy or icy conditions. Wear a helmet.
- **If riding a Motorcycle:** You should make sure to wear protective equipment and high visibility clothing to make sure you can be seen. Slow down and ease off the throttle.



REMINDER: BE SAFE, BE SEEN

- Pedestrians, people who cycle, horse riders, and motorcyclists should all wear bright or a high visibility clothing
- People who cycle or who are on a motorbike should make sure front and rear lights are working
- People driving vehicles should use dipped headlights and only use fog lights in fog conditions

Travelling Abroad

BEFORE YOU GO

Citizens planning travel abroad this winter are advised to monitor the Department of Foreign Affairs' [Travel Advice](#), [register](#) with their nearest Irish Embassy or Consulate, and take out comprehensive travel insurance.



CHECK TRAVEL ADVICE FOR YOUR DESTINATION

Travel Planning:

- Visit our country-specific travel advice for almost 200 countries and territories when planning your trip for the most up-to-date information: ireland.ie/en/dfa/overseas-travel/advice/
- Follow us on X and Instagram @DFATravelWise
- Read our 'Know Before You Go' section for helpful tips on local laws and customs, safety and security, and more: ireland.ie/en/dfa/overseas-travel/know-before-you-go/
- Be prepared – register your details with us and we can contact you, and provide assistance, if necessary and possible, if there is an unforeseen crisis such as a natural disaster or civil unrest, or if you have a family emergency while you are overseas: ireland.ie/en/dfa/overseas-travel/citizens-registration/
- If you have any urgent travel queries, you can contact the Travel Advice team at: traveladvice@ireland.ie

GET COMPREHENSIVE TRAVEL INSURANCE

We strongly recommend you take out comprehensive travel insurance that covers all planned activities and eventualities of your trip. Buying comprehensive travel insurance can save you and your family a lot of money if something goes wrong. It will also ensure that you get the medical attention you need, when you need it. Hospital bills can quickly run into thousands of euro, and a medical evacuation back to Ireland can cost thousands more.

Make sure that you have saved the contact information for your insurance provider before you depart, including any emergency assistance details, and have this information to hand should you need it while abroad.

As an Irish resident you are entitled to get healthcare through the public system in countries of the European Union (EU), European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland if you are ill or injured while on a temporary stay there. Ensure that you get or renew your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) before you go, and remember, you need one for every person travelling in your group.

For further advice on travel insurance and health matters please see here: ireland.ie/en/dfa/overseas-travel/know-before-you-go/travel-insurance-and-health/



CONSULAR ASSISTANCE ABROAD

We provide a range of help and support to citizens in distress abroad, see ireland.ie/en/dfa/overseas-travel/assistance-abroad/

24/7 emergency consular assistance is available through our Embassies and Consulates and through the Consular Assistance Unit in Dublin. Assistance is provided within the remit of our Consular Assistance Charter: ireland.ie/en/dfa/overseas-travel/assistance-abroad/consular-assistance-charter/

If you experience difficulty while abroad and require consular assistance, the relevant Embassy or Consulate can be contacted at: www.ireland.ie/en/dfa/embassies/

If you are in Ireland and calling on behalf of a family member or loved one abroad, the Consular Assistance Unit can be contacted on +353 (0)1 4082527 during office hours or out of hours on +353 (0)1 4082000, only in the event of a genuine emergency. Alternatively, you can send us your query in writing here: ireland.ie/en/dfa/overseas-travel/assistance-abroad/consular-assistance-charter/

LOOK AFTER EACH OTHER

MAKE THE RIGHT MEMORIES

[Ireland.ie/TravelWise](https://ireland.ie/TravelWise)



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

You, Your Community and the Winter (Building Strong Communities)

The Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) has a unique role to play in fostering the links that bring communities together. Our mission is to **“promote rural and community development and to support vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities throughout Ireland.”** For more information on our work, please see www.gov.ie/drcd

Strengthening community links helps to improve preparedness for emergencies. Experience has shown that active preparation leads to a better response in an emergency, which in turn, leads to the best possible outcome for all concerned. This preparedness enables the community to come together to use locally identified resources (people and equipment) during an emergency affecting their community, such as the flooding and heavy snowfall of recent years.

Although the response to challenging weather events is coordinated by Local Authorities, communities have an important role to play in emergencies. Central to this is neighbours knowing each other and working together. Being prepared, knowing your neighbours and working together will help to ensure that you and your community are winter-ready in the months ahead.



REMINDER: CHECK ON YOUR OLDER RELATIVES AND NEIGHBOURS

- If it's difficult for you to get around it will be impossible for them.
- Do you have their phone number(s)?
- If in doubt call the Gardai and ask them to check.
- Make sure they have enough fuel, food supplies and necessary medications.
- Remind them to keep their mobile phone charged.
- Phone them or call around.

A person wearing a high-visibility orange and black winter uniform, including a jacket and trousers with reflective stripes, stands next to a white off-road vehicle. The scene is set in a snowy, winter landscape with bare trees in the background. The vehicle has a license plate that partially reads '12 D 0844'.

KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY

Is your community based around an apartment building, a housing estate, a street, a road or a village? Is there a local residents' association or community alert group?

NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORTS

Do you have your neighbours' contact details? How can you help each other? For example, do you or your neighbour have an off-road vehicle or medical experience?

PLANNING

What emergencies might your community have to plan for? For example, fire, flooding, snow, power outage, water shortage or accessibility problems.

VULNERABLE NEIGHBOURS

Are some of your neighbours particularly vulnerable? For example, older people, people with disabilities or mobility problems, neighbours with young children or people without access to transport.

Available Supports for Communities



SENIORS ALERT SCHEME (SAS)

Are seniors in your area aware of the Seniors Alert Scheme? The SAS supplies emergency alarm pendants for seniors.

For further information, please visit www.pobal.ie

CLÁR PROGRAMME

The Department of Rural and Community Development has provided funding under the CLÁR programme to provide support for emergency responders in disadvantaged rural areas.

Details on eligibility and the application process are published on the Department's website www.gov.ie/drcd

VOLUNTEERING

Ireland has a strong tradition of volunteer activity. From checking in on vulnerable neighbours to staffing helplines, formal and informal volunteers have made a huge contribution during recent extreme weather events.

For more information on how you can contribute to your community, please see www.volunteer.ie

LIBRARIES

Libraries will offer physical and digital services and will provide services to older and vulnerable users in line with government guidelines and capacity.

For more information on the services you can access at your local library, please see www.librariesireland.ie

COMMUNITIES WORKING TOGETHER

Irish communities have faced several extreme weather events in the recent past. These extreme weather events have caused millions of euro worth of damage and disrupted the supply of electricity and water to hundreds of thousands of households nationwide.

In these circumstances, and to minimise the impact of future extreme weather events, we must prepare together and understand the practical steps that we can take to protect ourselves and our communities. We need to grow awareness of the threats we face, as well as the solutions and supports that are available to us.

Many of the steps we can take are quite simple, for example, acquiring a high visibility vest and keeping a stock of bottled water. Communities have valuable local knowledge, for instance, where black ice tends to form on roads.

As part of their Winter Service Plans, several local authorities nationwide provide salt bins and a fill of salt to community groups as well as making grit available at multiple locations. Can you volunteer to spread salt or grit on minor roads in your area to keep them open? If your area is prone to flooding, are sandbags available nearby? Do you know who to contact in the local authority to get these provisions?

We need to become better informed to be winter-ready, but more than this, we need to be proactive and act on the information that we have. It is crucial to take the time to consider our situation this winter and make the necessary preparations, individually and as communities.

Our message is simple. We need to be informed, prepare in advance and work together in our communities to be winter ready each year. Irish communities have successfully faced extreme weather events in the past, and we will continue to remain alert and prepare for future challenges moving forward. You can also contact your Local Authority to find out about community initiatives in your area.



You, Your Farm and the Winter

STAY SAFE

Farming is a high risk occupation and it is even more so when severe weather arrives. Now is the time to PLAN in order to minimise the effects of severe weather on your farm and your family.

LOOK AFTER YOUR PERSONAL SAFETY

- Before going out on your land always tell someone where you are going, and how long you will be gone for.
- Wear suitable layers of clothing.
- Carry a charged mobile phone and a torch.
- Never use a stand-by generator indoors, as fumes from the engine can be lethal.
- Be sure that equipment (for example a chainsaw) which you may not have used for some time is fully serviceable and that you are trained in how to use it. See www.hsa.ie for more detail.
- All persons engaged in farm related activity should follow advice on Covid-19 and be particularly vigilant where large numbers of people are gathered, for example, in Co-ops or Marts, where guidelines must be observed.

COLD WEATHER AND SNOW

- Plan how you will get food and water to your stock.
- Prevent your machinery and water supplies freezing up:
 - Have thermostatically controlled heaters in the pump house.
 - An insulation blanket/plastic sheet placed at the entrance to the milking parlour may help prevent milking machines freezing up.
 - Drain wash-down pumps.
- Check the antifreeze levels in all your engines.
- Have a plan to clear routes around your farm buildings, and a stock of gritting material and salt.
- When searching for animals in snow, wear high-visibility clothing so you can be easily seen.
- If there are essential tasks on the farm which require more than one person, farmers should not hesitate to ask for help from family and/or neighbours.



You can get more information from:
animalwelfare@agriculture.gov.ie

Animal Welfare Helpline:
01-6072379



LOOKING AFTER LIVESTOCK

- Do a fodder budget in spring to establish feed requirements for next winter.
- Build in a reserve of 1-2 bales per head, particularly on heavy land types.
- Maximise grass growth during the main growing season to build a reserve of winter feed.
- Get your silage analysed. Meal supplementation rates must be based on silage quality.
- Have grit and salt available to ensure access to sheds in the event of snow or icy conditions.
- Have a plan to deal with power outages.

FLOODING ON THE FARM

Read the flooding section of this booklet carefully. Get more information from the website www.flooding.ie

If your farm is in an area at risk of flooding:

- Move your livestock to areas you can access if flooding risk is high.
- Carefully assess the depth of floods before driving through them.
- Only use suitable vehicles if you have to drive through floods.
- Secure valuable equipment and fuel supplies in suitable locations so that they are not ruined by water.

STORM SAFETY ON THE FARM

- Store light items indoors and tidy the farmyard.
- Ensure all gutters on buildings are secure and clean water drains are free of debris and the outfall is clear.
- Ensure all gates and doors are hanging correctly and are securely fastened.
- Ensure all roof sheets are secure. When working at heights always hire in suitable lifting equipment – never work off a ladder.
- Move machinery into sheltered area.

In the event that sheeting, doors or items become loose or are displaced during storms, do not attempt to repair it until after the storm has fully passed. Undertaking repairs during a storm will highly likely lead to a serious incident.



ELECTRICITY

Get a copy of the booklet “Farm Well... Farm Safely” from the ESB Networks website www.esb.ie it tells you all you need to know about using electric equipment on your farm.

- Stand-by generators. Special regulations apply to the connection and use of generators.
- The connection must be installed by a qualified electrician.
- ESB Networks must be notified of proposed operation of a generator.
- Incorrect connection can cause a ‘back-feed’ posing a risk to yourself, other consumers and maintenance staff.

OTHER HAZARDS

Be careful when using equipment which you may not have used for some time:

- Be sure that it has been serviced properly and is in good working order.
- Do not “Risk It” - if you do not really know how to use the equipment get someone to advise you or find out how to use it.
- Particular care is needed while using chainsaws - see the booklet “Safe Working with Timber and Chainsaws” on the HSA website www.hsa.ie and wear the correct Personal Protective Equipment.

Business Sector



PREPARING YOUR BUSINESS FOR SEVERE WEATHER

Every business has a number of challenges to overcome to ensure business continuity in the event of severe weather. Preparation is key to minimising disruption during such events.

A practical checklist on Business Continuity Planning in Severe Weather is available at www.enterprise.gov.ie publications.

Practical considerations on how a severe weather event can affect operations include:

Impact on Place of Business

- Consider how various severe weather scenarios can affect the place of work, that is, the site and buildings.
- Is the location or access to it at risk of flooding? Read the flooding section of this booklet carefully. Get more information from the website www.flooding.ie
- Are access points liable to difficulties, for example, access roads positioned on a slope at risk of ice?
- Are water pipes insulated (including in and around vacant buildings)?
- Ensure that the business has information and contact details regarding key services including local authorities.
- Review insurance cover and contact insurance advisors in relation to any concern a business may have.

Impact on Employees

- Consider the potential impact as a result of employees being unable to attend the place of work.
- Consider what additional measures need to be taken to ensure employees can work safely, while at work.



Up to date information and resources on Health and Safety and the Covid-19 Work Safely Protocol can be found at:

www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19_coronavirus_information_and_resources/

- Ensure the business has up-to-date employee contact details and a communications plan.
- Consider how alternative work practices could minimise disruption, for example, teleworking, shift-work and consider how the Human Resource Management practices in the business can cater for disruption.
- Ensure that management responsibility is clearly assigned for planning and making preparations; identify business critical roles and develop plans for ensuring continuity.

Impact on Customers

- Consider how customers may be impacted upon.
- Consider the business impact as a result of lower custom.
- Consider alternative means to serving customers and what strategies can be employed to minimise disruption, for example, online commerce.
- Assess how surrounding pavements and access points can be cleared in the event of snow and ice and make preparations for suitable equipment being available.

- Consider how customer safety can be assured within the public areas of the business.
- Have in place a communications plan for customers.

Impact on Suppliers

- Consider the impact of a disruption to supplies and review stock levels.
- Liaise with key suppliers and assess their preparedness in the event of severe weather affecting their businesses.
- Consider especially time-sensitive supplies.
- Consider alternative transportation routes and logistics channels.
- Consider safety of suppliers of goods and services, which may entail access to less frequented areas of premises.



The HSA website www.hsa.ie provides comprehensive information on health and safety at work in Ireland.

Schools and Early Learning and Childcare Services

The following is provided as guidance for school management and early learning and care settings.

Be prepared.

Be informed.

Be vigilant.

PREPARATION

Schools and Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings should conduct a pre-event evaluation of what should be, or could be, in place to ensure the opening of the school or ELCs in the event of severe weather. Areas for consideration are maintenance of premises and utilities, salting and gritting and transport to and from school or ELC. Access to a battery operated radio and torches should be put in place.

Schools and ELCs should ensure that every member of staff is clear as to their role and responsibilities during severe weather including in the event of a closure. A member of staff should be assigned to monitor weather conditions

and to contact the principal response agencies and school transport services where required.

Included in the school and ELC plans for severe weather should be the proposed responses and roles which will apply in the event of a Red level weather warning from Met Éireann.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Department of Education and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Youth and Integration will advise schools and Early Learning Centres (ELC's) of the decisions of the National Emergency Coordination Group. Schools and ELCs (in this guidance we refer to them both as "settings") should ensure to have the relevant contact details of the principal response agencies for their area, including An Garda Síochána, fire brigade and local authorities and other appropriate services. Schools and ELCs with school-age children should also have contact details for the transport services serving their setting. These details should be checked regularly and kept up-to-date.

Settings should establish communications with neighbouring schools or ELCs as relevant to ensure, as far as practicable, a unified local response to severe weather events may be implemented. It is noted



however that while settings in an area may try to co-ordinate their decisions, the circumstances can vary between individual settings in close proximity and may on occasions lead to different decisions being taken.

Most settings use a text messaging service to communicate with parents and staff. Local radio, the setting's website or social media may also be useful to alert parents and students to school conditions and closure should this arise.

STATE EXAMINATIONS

In the event of severe weather during scheduled state examinations the State Examinations Commission will communicate with schools to put in place alternative arrangements.

CLOSING A SCHOOL OR ELC

The decision to close a school or ELC rests with the setting's management authority taking into consideration the full guidance and direction available from the principal response agencies. Any decision to close is taken in the interest of child safety, having assessed the local risks and having consulted, as appropriate, with school transport operators.

Some of the issues that settings take into account include:

- conditions in the setting itself
- capacity of the setting to ensure the health and safety of children and students
- ability of parents, students, staff and school transport services to safely negotiate local road conditions to reach the setting
- guidance and direction from the principal response agencies



Guidance for schools on time lost due to unforeseen closures as a result of severe weather is set out in circular 0072/2022 which is available at www.education.ie

Guidance for ELCs on *force majeure* is set out in the relevant Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Youth and Integration ELC provider agreements which are available at www.ncs.gov.ie/en/information-resources and www.first5fundingmodel.gov.ie/core-funding.

WEATHER WARNINGS FROM MET ÉIREANN

Schools and ELCs should monitor weather forecasts in order to be prepared for any severe weather, which may affect the setting. During periods of severe weather, settings should assess the situation using the above guidance. Settings should be prepared, keep themselves informed and remain vigilant.

In recent years, Met Éireann has introduced colour coded weather warnings as follows:

STATUS YELLOW – Be Aware

STATUS ORANGE – Be Prepared

STATUS RED – Take Action

Settings should respond appropriately to such warnings using the above guidance.

It should be borne in mind that there may also be weather events, which may be fast moving with little warning. For example, consider the case of Storm Darwin in February 2014 where Met Éireann had issued a Status Red alert for the Cork and Kerry regions; however, on that occasion the weather moved rapidly across the southern half of the country affecting a number of other counties.

There may also be Status Orange weather warnings that may require action to be taken because of the particular local circumstances, e.g. in areas prone to flooding or areas located on the coast. Any assessment taken by the setting for actions necessary should be guided by local knowledge and experience and by way of advice from the principal response agencies.

STATUS RED WEATHER WARNING

All weather warnings of Status Red will require some action on behalf of settings. Schools and ELCs need to assess the potential impact of such weather events taking account of past experiences and in light of advice on the current event from the principal response agencies in their area.

A Status Red weather warning for heavy rain may be particularly relevant if the local area is prone to flooding. A Status Red warning related to ice or snow, which may compact, may cause local issues due to the location of the setting and/or the routes taken to reach the setting.

STATUS RED WEATHER WARNING FOR WIND

Schools and ELCs should note in particular Status Red weather warnings where strong winds or storm conditions are forecasted. Due to the high degree of unpredictability as to the impact of the weather associated with such a Status Red warning on local conditions, settings should use the following guidance to assist them in making their assessment.

Status Red weather warning for wind related conditions may be given in advance of a setting opening or it may arise during the day while a school or ELC is underway.

ADVANCE WARNING OF STATUS RED

Following consultation at a national level with the Office of Emergency Planning and the management bodies for schools, the Departments of Education and Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth's advice to settings is that they should consider not opening where a Status Red weather warning related to wind is forecast to coincide with the period/s during which children, students, staff or parents would be expected to be travelling to and from school or the ELC.

Whether the setting should open later in the day, where an improvement to the weather is forecast, is a decision which should be taken by the operator based on the most recent government messaging and guidance.

WARNING OF STATUS RED THAT ARISES DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Where the Status Red weather warning related to wind is issued when the school or ELC is already underway with children, students and staff present, the school or ELC management should fully consider the public messaging from the government departments and state agencies, the school transport services or other appropriate agencies for advice on whether it may be safe to undertake journeys from the setting or when such journeys should commence. Consideration should also be taken as to the safety of parents undertaking journeys to the school to collect children and students.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

A decision may have to be taken on health and safety grounds based on the advice available to the school or ELC during a Status Red warning related to wind. Settings should plan for such an eventuality by considering how children, students and staff can be accommodated within the setting while awaiting an improvement in the weather.

Contact Information

EMERGENCY SERVICES

If you have an emergency please phone the emergency services at **112** or **999**.

In the event of any emergency on water, including offshore, along the coastline, on inland waterways, lakes or rivers call **112** or **999** and ask for the **Coast Guard**.

Remember to have phone numbers for your doctor, chemist, children's schools, local authority, Garda station, service providers and family members conveniently to hand so that you can locate them easily should an emergency arise.



SERVICES

ESB Networks LoCall
1800 372 999

Gas Networks Ireland LoCall
1800 20 50 50

Irish Water LoCall
1800 278 278

WEATHER FORECAST

Met Éireann's weather forecasts and warnings are available on www.met.ie and on the Met Éireann App, where you can search for detailed 7-day forecasts for over 1,200 named locations around Ireland and optionally get a geo-located forecast for your location. The Rainfall Radar is also available there - zoom in to see the latest rainfall in a local area.

Tune in to the weather forecast on RTÉ after the News, and on national and local radio hourly news bulletins.

HSE MAP CENTRE

The Health Service Executive has a facility on the homepage of its website www.hse.ie where you can find health services in your area. Just enter your address and choose an option to find your nearest hospital, pharmacy, doctor, Garda station, nursing home or dentist. Directions are provided from your home to the required service.

TRANSPORT

The website www.gov.ie/transport provides links to all public transport providers.

During periods of Severe Weather or disruption, the individual transport provider sites and social media channels are regularly updated.

The following are contact details for Public Transport providers. You should also keep to hand contact information for your local private transport operators.

RAIL

Iarnrod Éireann including Intercity/Dart/Commuter Rail:

Phone Number: 01 836 6222 or
LoCall 0818 366222

Website: www.irishrail.ie

X: [@irishrail](https://twitter.com/irishrail)

Facebook: [/iarnrodeireann](https://www.facebook.com/iarnrodeireann)

Luas Services

Luas Customer Care

Phone Number: 01 4614911 or
LoCall 0818 300 604

Website: www.luas.ie

X: [@luas](https://twitter.com/luas)

Facebook: [/luas](https://www.facebook.com/luas)



For the most current contact information for your local Bus Station, please refer to the 'Bus Station Information' section of the Bus Éireann website at <https://buseireann.ie/inner.php?id=373>

BUS

Dublin Bus Services:

Phone Number: (01) 8734222

Website: www.dublinbus.ie

X: [@dublinbusnews](https://twitter.com/dublinbusnews)

Facebook: [/dublinbusnews](https://facebook.com/dublinbusnews)

Bus Éireann Services (Intercity/Commuter):

Phone Number: 0818 836 611 or
LoCall 0818 836 611

Website: www.buseireann.ie

X: [@buseireann](https://twitter.com/buseireann)

Facebook: [/buseireann](https://facebook.com/buseireann)

Go Ahead Ireland Services:

Phone Number: LoCall 0818 804071

Website: www.goaheadireland.ie

X: [@GoAheadIreland](https://twitter.com/GoAheadIreland)

Facebook: [/goaheadireland12](https://facebook.com/goaheadireland12)

Local Link Services:

Website:

www.transportforireland.ie/tfi-local-link

Services are operated and managed
by local offices throughout the country.

Visit [www.transportforireland.ie/
support/your-tfi-local-link-office/](http://www.transportforireland.ie/support/your-tfi-local-link-office/)

for contact information for services
in your area.

BUS ÉIREANN BUS STATIONS

LOCATION

Note * denotes stations where facilities are shared with Iarnród Éireann.

To contact Bus Éireann

by telephone, please
call 0818 836 611

Ennis

Station Road,
Ennis V95 RY82

Athlone

Southern
Station Road
Athlone N37 NF88

Galway

Ceannt Station,
Eyre Square, Galway
H91 T9CE*

Ballina

Kevin Barry Street,
Ballina F26 NV06

Killarney

Fairhill, Killarney
V93 TFP6

Ballyshannon

Main Street,
Ballyshannon

Letterkenny

Port Rd.,
Letterkenny
F92 TN23

Cavan

Farnham Street,
Cavan
H12 X6D3

Limerick

Colbert Station,
Parnell Street,
Limerick V94 H2PP*

Cork

Parnell Place, Cork
T12 K2WR

Monaghan

North Road,
Monaghan
H18 PN25

Drogheda

Donore Road,
Drogheda A92
HE14

Sligo

Lord Edward Street,
Sligo F91 AW02

Busáras, Dublin

Central Bus Station,
Store Street, Dublin 1
D01 P6V6

Tralee

Casement Station,
Tralee
V92 HX22

Bus Station Dundalk

Long Walk, Dundalk
A91 P02H

Waterford

The Quay,
Waterford
X91 YD71



For the most current contact information for your local School Transport office please refer to the 'School Transport' section of the Bus Éireann website at <https://buseireann.ie/inner.php?id=523>

BUS ÉIREANN SCHOOL TRANSPORT OFFICES

Contact your local School Transport Office

Bus Éireann School Transport
customer contact center
Phone : Lo Call 0818 919 910.

Bus Éireann School Transport service
updates / disruptions – Contact customer
care or see www.buseireann.ie and social
media outlets for updates and alerts.

REGION	CONTACT OFFICE
Westmeath, Longford, Offaly, Roscommon, Laois	Bus Éireann School Transport Office Station Road Athlone
Mayo	Bus Éireann School Transport Office Kevin Barry Street, Ballina
Dublin, Kildare, Meath, Wicklow	Bus Éireann School Transport Office Regional School Transport Office, Area Office, Broadstone, Dublin 7
Louth, Monaghan, Cavan	Bus Éireann School Transport Office Bus Station Dundalk, Long Walk, Dundalk
Cork	Bus Éireann School Transport Office Capwell, Cork
Clare, Limerick, Tipperary (North)	Bus Éireann School Transport Office Roxboro Road, Limerick
Galway	Bus Éireann School Transport Office Ceannt Station, Eyre Square, Galway
Sligo, Leitrim	Bus Éireann School Transport Office Lord Edward Street, Sligo
Donegal	Bus Éireann School Transport Office Stranorlar
Waterford, Carlow, Tipperary (South), Kilkenny, Wexford	Bus Éireann School Transport Office Plunkett Station, Waterford
Kerry	Bus Éireann School Transport Office Casement Station, Tralee

AIR

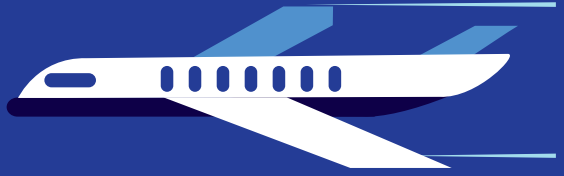
Note: During severe weather those intending to fly should check with their individual airlines for service updates before travelling to the airport.

Arrivals/Departure Information is available at the airport websites:

AIRPORT	WEBSITE	PHONE NUMBERS
Dublin Airport	www.dublinairport.com X: @dublinairport	(01) 9441111
Cork Airport	www.corkairport.com X: @corkairport	(021) 431 3131
Shannon Airport	www.shannonairport.ie X: @shannonairport	(061) 712000
Ireland West Airport Knock	www.irelandwestairport.com X: @Irelandwest	(094) 936 8100
Kerry Airport	www.kerryairport.ie X: @kerryairport	(066) 976 4644
Donegal Airport	www.donegalairport.ie X: @DonegalA	(074) 954 8284 (074) 954 8232
Aer Arann Islands	www.aerarannislands.ie X: @AerArann	(091) 593034



Please consult dfa.ie/travel for travel advice to help you make an informed decision before traveling to other countries.



SEA

Note: During severe weather those intending to travel should check with their individual ferry operator for service updates before travelling to the port.

Arrivals/Departure Information is available at the Ferry Operator websites:

Brittany Ferries:

Website: www.brittanyferries.ie

X: @BrittanyFerries

Phone: (01) 4277801

Irish Ferries:

Website: www.irishferries.com

X: @Irish_Ferries

Phone: 0818 300 400

P&O Ferries:

Website: www.poferries.ie

X: @POferriesupdate

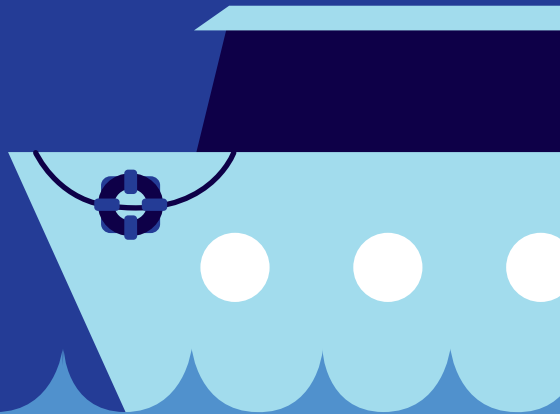
Phone: (01) 6869467

StenaLine:

Website: www.stenaline.ie

X: @StenaLineUKIE

Phone: (01) 907 5555



CITY AND COUNTY COUNCILS

COUNCIL	WEBSITE	PHONE NUMBERS	
		OFFICE HOURS	OUT OF OFFICE HOURS
Carlow Co.	www.carlow.ie	(059) 917 0300	(059) 917 0300
Cavan Co.	www.cavancoco.ie	(049) 437 8300	(049) 437 8300
Clare Co.	www.clarecoco.ie	(065) 682 1616	087 416 9496
Cork Co.	www.corkcoco.ie	(021) 427 6891	(021) 480 0048
Cork City	www.corkcity.ie	(021) 492 4000	(021) 496 6512
Donegal Co.	www.donegal.ie	(074) 915 3900	Water: 1800 278 278 Roads: (074) 917 2288
Dublin City	www.dublincity.ie	(01) 222 2222	(01) 679 6186
Dun Laoghaire / Rathdown	www.dlrcoco.ie	(01) 205 4700	(01) 677 8844
Fingal Co.	www.fingalcoco.ie	(01) 890 5000	(01) 890 5000
Galway Co.	www.galway.ie	(091) 509 000	(091) 509 069
Galway City	www.galwaycity.ie	(091) 536 400	(091) 536 400
Kerry Co.	www.kerrycoco.ie	(066) 718 3500	(066) 718 3588
Kildare Co.	www.kildare.ie/ countycouncil	(045) 980 200	1800 800 444
Kilkenny Co.	www.kilkennycoco.ie	(056) 779 4000	0818 399 399
Laois Co.	www.laois.ie	(057) 866 4000	(057) 866 4000
Leitrim Co.	www.leitrimcoco.ie	(071) 962 0005	(071) 962 0005
Limerick City & Co.	www.limerick.ie	(061) 496 000	(061) 417 833
Longford Co.	www.longfordcoco.ie	(043) 334 3300	1800 211 525
Louth Co.	www.louthcoco.ie	042 933 5457	042 933 5457
Mayo Co.	www.mayococo.ie	(094) 906 4000	(094) 903 4706

COUNCIL	WEBSITE	PHONE NUMBERS	
		OFFICE HOURS	OUT OF OFFICE HOURS
Meath Co.	www.meath.ie	(046) 909 7000	1800 445 335
Monaghan Co.	www.monaghan.ie	(047) 30 500	Monaghan: 087 650 833 Carrickmacross / Castleblayney: 087 687 3154 Ballybay /Clones: 087 204 1672 Monaghan Town: 087 242 4222
Offaly Co.	www.offaly.ie	(057) 934 6800	1800 750 750
Roscommon Co.	www.roscommoncoco.ie	(090) 663 7100	(090) 663 7100
Sligo Co.	www.sligococo.ie	(071) 911 1111	Roads (Town): 087 2600111 County: 087 7789935 Water/Waste: 1800 278 278
South Dublin Co.	www.sdcc.ie	(01) 414 9000	(01) 457 4907
Tipperary Co.	www.tipperarycoco.ie	0818 06 5000	Roads / Housing: 0818 06 5003 Water: 1800 278 278
Waterford City & Co.	www.waterfordcouncil.ie	0818 10 20 20	0818 10 20 20
Westmeath Co.	www.westmeathcoco.ie	(044) 933 2000	(044) 933 2000
Wexford Co.	www.wexfordcoco.ie	(053) 919 6000	(053) 919 6000
Wicklow Co.	www.wicklow.ie	(0404) 20 100	(01) 291 6117 Water/Waste Emergencies: 1800 278 278

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

EIRCODE:

DOCTOR:

(Name)

(Phone)

(Alt Phone)

VETERINARY SURGEON:

(Name)

(Phone)

(Alt Phone)

DENTIST:

(Name)

(Phone)

(Alt Phone)

NEIGHBOUR:

(Name)

(Phone)

(Alt Phone)

OTHER EMERGENCY CONTACT:

(Name)

(Phone)

(Alt Phone)

CHEMIST:

(Name)

(Phone)

(Alt Phone)

SCHOOL:

(Name)

(Phone)

(Alt Phone)

GARDA SÍOCHÁNA:

999 or 112

(Alt Phone)

**FIRE/AMBULANCE
SERVICE/COAST GUARD**

999 or 112

(Alt Phone)

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Gas

(Phone)

(Alt Phone)

Electricity

(Phone)

(Alt Phone)

Water

(Phone)

(Alt Phone)

City/County Council

(Phone)

(Alt Phone)

Developed by

**THE OFFICE OF
EMERGENCY PLANNING**

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Bus Éireann
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Health Service Executive
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Irish Water
Met Éireann
National Disability Authority
Office of Public Works
Road Safety Authority
Teagasc
Water Safety Ireland

The contents of these pages are provided as an information guide only. They are intended to enhance public access to information for preparing and dealing with events during the winter. While every effort is made in preparing material for publication no responsibility is accepted by or on behalf of the Government Task Force on Emergency Planning or the Office of Emergency Planning for any errors, omissions or misleading statements on these pages or any site to which these pages connect.



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

This booklet can be downloaded from the website www.winterready.ie or by emailing or writing to the Office of Emergency Planning, National Emergency Coordination Centre, Agriculture House (2 East), Kildare Street, Dublin 2

An Irish language version is also available. Copies are available by contacting the Office of Emergency Planning.

www.winterready.ie

X: @emergencyIE

OEP Phone: 01-237 3800

E-mail: oepl@defence.ie

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