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ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN

DECEMBER 2010

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: PREPARING FOR WINTER

The winter can be long and hazardous if you are not careful. But if you do a little planning you can be ready for winter.

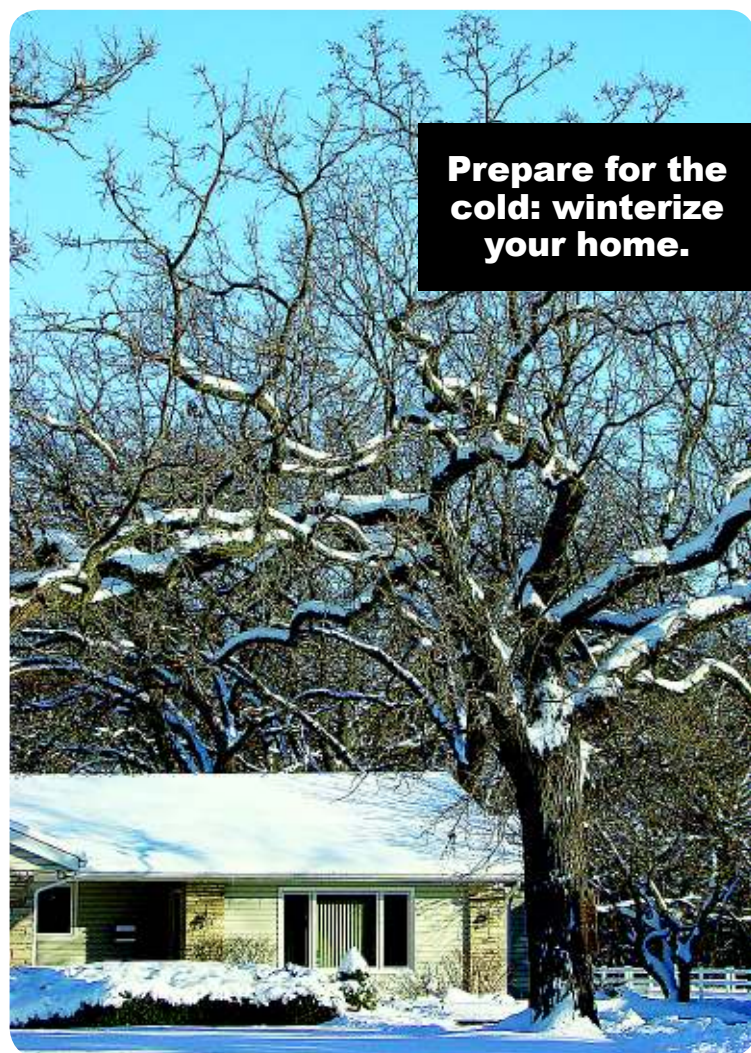
Although winter comes about the same time every year, sometimes we are not ready for the many hazards that come with the season. The more you are prepared the safer and healthier you will be.

Many of us would rather stay inside than go out and brave the cold. However, you should still take precautions when staying indoors.

• Winterize your home

- Clean out gutters and repair any roof leaks.
- If you have water pipes that run alongside exterior walls, make sure they are insulated, so that pipes do not freeze.
- Seal windows with weather stripping or insulation to keep the warmth in and the cold out.
- Check heating system and make sure it is clean and works properly.

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Keep an emergency kit filled with flashlights (with batteries), weather radio, and baby items (if needed).

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- If you have a fireplace make sure it is clean.
- Test your smoke alarm batteries and make sure you do not need to replace them.
- **Be prepared for power outages**
 - Stock food that needs no refrigeration or cooking
 - Store water in clean containers
 - Keep emergency kit filled with:
 - Flashlights (with batteries)
 - Weather radio
 - Baby items, if needed
- **Prevent carbon monoxide emergencies**
 - Install a carbon monoxide detector that will alert you. Carbon monoxide is deadly, odorless, and colorless
 - Learn symptoms of poisoning – sick feeling, headaches, and disorientation
 - Keep grills and generators out of the house and the garage.

If you have to get outdoors in the cold remember these tips:

- Wear appropriate clothing – dress in layers.
- Sprinkle sand or cat litter on icy patches.
- Work slowly if outdoors
- Take a buddy and emergency kit if you are doing physical activity outdoors
- Carry a cell phone

Do not forget about your car

- Make sure you are up to date on your service
- Make sure the antifreeze level is where it should be

- Keep the gas tank full to keep from getting ice in the tank and fuel lines

Keep an emergency kit in your car

- Blankets
- Food and water
- Maps
- Flashlight, battery powered radio, and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Plastic bags

Winter comes every year and with these suggestions you can be prepared!



SOURCES:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "Be Prepared! Staying safe and healthy in the winter weather"

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