
BE PREPARED AND SAFE DURING EXTREME WINTER WEATHER THIS CHRISTMAS WEEKEND

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

December 22, 2022

The National Weather Service, Gaylord has issued a Blizzard Warning, effective now through Saturday night, December 24. Grand Traverse County Emergency Management is encouraging citizens to be extra cautious, be flexible with holiday travel plans, and prepare ahead of the severe snow, winds, and extreme low temperatures that are forecast for the county.

"Citizens are encouraged to monitor local weather reports and follow the appropriate steps to stay safe during these extremely dangerous and potentially life-threatening blizzard conditions." said Gregg Bird, Emergency Management Coordinator

The National Weather Service, Gaylord advises travel is expected to be "DANGEROUS to nearly IMPOSSIBLE" Friday evening through Saturday, especially during the nighttime hours. Additionally, conditions may deteriorate to the point where Grand Traverse County first responders may be delayed in getting to emergencies. We are asking that you plan, notify family and friends that may be planning to travel to heed these warnings and make appropriate alternative plans. The best defense against getting stranded during blizzard conditions is to not be on the roads.

We have worked with the American Red Cross, Salvation Army, and multiple other local partners to identify emergency shelters and warming centers throughout the county should extended power outages occur. These shelters will be opened based upon the need and availability and announced via Emergency Notification Systems, Emergency Alert System (EAS), FEMA's Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS), along with 211, local media and social media methods.

We encourage all citizens to enroll in the Grand Traverse Emergency Notification System – CodeRED at www.GTCountyMI.gov/CodeRED or by texting "GTCodeRED" to 99411. Additionally, visitors and non-residents are encouraged to download the CodeRED app in the Google Play or Apple App stores.

Winter preparedness tips:

- Develop a 72-hour emergency supply kit that includes essential items like a three-day supply of food and water, a battery-powered or hand-crank weather radio, blankets, flashlights with extra batteries and emergency contact information.
- Identify a safe alternative heat source and supply of fuel in the event of a power outage.
- Listen to the radio and TV for weather reports and emergency information.
- Stay inside during winter storms. If you must go outside, wear several layers of lightweight clothing, a hat, and gloves to prevent loss of body heat. Cover your mouth to protect your lungs.
- For those requiring oxygen, ensure you have a backup power source in case of long-term power outages.

Automotive preparedness tips:

- Carry an emergency supply kit in your vehicle with essential items such as salt, sand, a shovel, food, and blankets.

- Ensure your car has the proper mix of antifreeze and water in the cooling system and that windshield washing fluid is topped off.
- Keep tires at the car manufacturer's recommended pressure and routinely check tire pressure during cold weather.
- Keep the fuel tank near full to prevent freezing of the fuel line.
- When traveling, let someone know your destination, route and expected arrival time.

Motorists are encouraged to check travel conditions and weather reports before driving. Major road closures can be found at www.michigan.gov/MiDrive. Additional resources can be found at www.michigan.gov/RoadConditions.

Grand Traverse Emergency Management asks that you tune into local news and/or view these websites rather than calling your local Michigan State Police post or 911 for travel conditions.

Additional resources and preparedness information can be found at the following:

Grand Traverse Co. Emergency Management website - www.GTCountyMI.gov/EM

Grand Traverse County Emergency Management Facebook page – www.FB.com/GTCEmergency

The American Red Cross Preparedness website - <http://www.redcross.org/prepare>

National Weather Service, Gaylord website - <https://www.weather.gov/apx/>

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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