

Portage Prepares

Helping Portage County Citizens prepare for emergencies and disasters.



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Winter Safety Tips for the Home

Protecting the Outside of Your Home

Remove dead tree branches. Ice and snow, combined with winter winds, can cause limbs to snap and break and could do damage to your home.



Winter Safety Tips for Your Home

Every home should have a disaster supplies kit that contains at least the basics: a flashlight or battery-operated lanterns, portable radio, extra batteries, first aid kit, bottled water/juices, nonperishable food, manual can opener, and extra blankets for warmth.

Other items to consider including in the kit are extra prescriptions and items for babies or family members with special needs. Store an ample supply of items necessary to sustain every member in the home for at least three days, in case you're snowed or iced in.

If possible, before winter sets in, invest in an alternative heating source, such as a fireplace, propane or kerosene heater, or generator - in case of an extended power outage.

Check your homeowner's insurance policy to make sure coverage is adequate for the type of winter weather in your area. Learn what is excluded from the policy.



Make sure auxiliary heaters and fireplaces are adequately maintained and serviced. Many fires related to auxiliary heating sources are preventable through simple maintenance. Before installing a wood-burning stove, check with local fire officials as to codes and proper installation techniques. Do not store kerosene in a non-approved container or inside your home and be sure to keep flammable materials (walls, curtains, etc.) away from all heat sources.



During the winter, drain pipes if your power goes off or if you plan an extended stay away from home. To drain, turn off the water heater and main water supply, open all faucets in the house and drain the system by keeping the valves open. Drain all toilets by holding the lever down until the tank empties.



If well water is used, the pump's electric switch should be shut off and the pressure tank and system should be drained.