



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Georgetown County moves to OPCON 4

GEORGETOWN COUNTY (3:30 p.m.) — Georgetown County government has moved to Operating Condition (OPCON) 4 in preparation for the possibility of freezing rain and sleet forecast for Tuesday and Wednesday. OPCON 4 indicates an “alert” status in preparation for a possible threat. County and municipal officials, in conjunction with S.C. Emergency Management and the National Weather Service, are monitoring the situation closely and taking appropriate preparedness actions. The county’s Emergency Operations Center has not been activated.

The National Weather Service has issued a Winter Storm Warning for Georgetown County from 5 a.m. Tuesday through 6 p.m. Wednesday. Predictions call for precipitation consisting mostly of freezing rain for the coastal areas of the county, followed by sleet and snow. This has the potential to create extremely dangerous road conditions and cause widespread power outages as limbs snap from the weight of freezing rain and fall onto power lines.

No bridges in Georgetown County will close, but motorists are advised to use extreme caution when crossing during icy conditions. Elevated road surfaces, including bridges and overpasses will be the first roadways to be impacted by winter conditions. Dangerous road conditions are expected to persist through Wednesday.

Residents are advised to be prepared for lengthy power outages.

Georgetown County Emergency Management recommends the following precautions:

Before a Winter Storm

- Add winter supplies like rock salt to melt ice and shovels to your disaster supply kit.
- Prepare for possible isolation in your home by having sufficient heating fuel; regular fuel sources may be cut off.
- Insulate pipes with insulation or newspapers and plastic and allow faucets to drip a little during cold weather to avoid freezing.
- Learn how to shut off water valves in case a pipe bursts.
- Have your vehicle serviced to ensure it is prepared for the winter season.
- Place a winter emergency kit in every vehicle that includes: a shovel; windshield

scraper and small broom; flashlight; battery-powered radio; extra batteries; water; snack food; matches; extra hats, socks and mittens; first aid kit with pocket knife; necessary medications; blankets; tow chain or rope; road salt and sand; booster cables; emergency flares; fluorescent distress flag.

During a Winter Storm

- Stay indoors. If you must go outside, dress in layers of loose fitting, lightweight clothing. Wear a hat that covers your ears. Wear mittens and cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs. Wear waterproof, insulated boots to keep your feet warm and dry and to maintain your footing in ice and snow.
- Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow. Overexertion can bring on a heart attack—a major cause of death in the winter. If you must shovel snow, stretch before going outside.
- Keep dry. Change wet clothing frequently to prevent a loss of body heat. Wet clothing loses all of its insulating value and transmits heat rapidly.
- Watch for signs of frostbite such as the loss of feeling and white or pale appearance in extremities such as finger, toes, ear lobes and the tip of your nose.
- Drive only if it is absolutely necessary. If you must drive, travel in the day, don't travel alone and keep others informed of your schedule. Decrease your speed and leave plenty of room to stop the vehicle on icy roads.
- If trapped in your car during a winter weather event, pull off of the highway and turn on your hazard lights. Remain in your vehicle where rescuers are most likely to find you. Run the engine and heater about 10 minutes each hour to keep warm. When the engine is running, open a downwind window slightly for ventilation and periodically clear snow from the exhaust pipe. This will protect you from possible carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Exercise to maintain body heat, but avoid overexertion. Drink fluids to avoid dehydration.

After a Winter Storm

- Listen to your local radio or television station for the latest weather and traffic reports.
- Go to a designated shelter if your home loses power or heat during periods of extreme cold.
- Check on your animals and ensure that their access to food and water is not blocked by snow drifts, ice or other obstacles. Bring them indoors, if possible.
- Be aware of possible carbon monoxide poisoning, electric shock and fire if using alternative sources for electricity, heating or cooking.

For more winter weather tips, visit www.scemd.org.

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