



**For Immediate Release**

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**PLANNING THAT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE: WINTER WEATHER SURVIVAL KIT FOR YOUR CAR**

Even a short drive can turn into a dangerous one, especially during severe weather. The Cook County Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM) advises residents to take extra precautions when driving during storms and to also keep an emergency kit in each of their vehicles in case they break down or get stuck during a storm.

A basic safety kit should include the following items:

Recommended items:

- A shovel
- Windshield scraper and small broom
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Battery powered radio
- Water
- Snack food, including energy bars
- Matches and small candles
- Extra hats, socks and mittens
- First aid kit with pocket knife
- Necessary medications
- Blankets or sleeping bag
- Tow chain or rope
- Road salt, sand or cat litter for traction
- Jumper cables
- Emergency flares and reflectors
- Fluorescent distress flag and whistle to attract attention
- Cell phone adapter to plug into lighter

Kit tips:

Reverse batteries in flashlights to avoid accidentally switching it on and running down the battery. Store items in the passenger compartment in case the trunk is jammed or frozen shut.

Other tips:

Gas tanks should be kept at least half full. Travelers should always tell someone where they're going and the route they'll take. Travelers should stay with their vehicle; walking in a storm can be very dangerous, other vehicles may not see you or you may become lost or exhausted. Always check conditions in and around your vehicle; snow can plug a vehicle's exhaust system and cause deadly carbon monoxide gas to enter the car. If stranded for a prolonged period, only run the engine for 10 minutes an hour to conserve gas and make sure the exhaust pipe is free of snow. Keeping a window open a crack while running the engine, is also a good idea.

For more information about winter weather survival tips, contact Natalia Derevyanny at 312.603.8286 or [Natalia.derevyanny@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:Natalia.derevyanny@cookcountyil.gov) and visit [www.cookcountyhomelandsecurity.org](http://www.cookcountyhomelandsecurity.org).

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The Cook County Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management enhances the safety and security of Cook County and its' residents by working to build capacity to prevent, protect against, mitigate the effects of, respond to and recover from all incidents, whether man-made and natural. For more information, visit our website at [www.cookcountyhomelandsecurity.org](http://www.cookcountyhomelandsecurity.org).