

State Issues Weather Warnings, Advice

Written by Steve Frank

Tuesday, 21 January 2014 14:09

With cold temperatures and winter precipitation headed to much of the state, North Carolina Emergency Management and State Highway Patrol officials are urging residents and visitors to monitor local weather conditions and use caution when driving this evening and tomorrow morning. “Our main concern with this storm is difficult travel conditions during the evening commute and into Wednesday, so we’re urging everyone to be safe,” said Public Safety Secretary Frank L. Perry. “Don’t take any unnecessary risks and use extra caution if you are driving.”

Weather forecasters have issued a winter weather warning for several mountain counties and a winter weather advisory for most of central and eastern North Carolina through Wednesday afternoon. Temperatures will plummet late Tuesday afternoon as precipitation begins to fall. The mountain counties are expected to see between two and six inches of snow, while much of central and eastern North Carolina could get one to three inches of snow with the heaviest amounts along the Virginia border counties.

Perry said drivers could encounter patches of black ice once the sun goes down. With wind chills in the single digits overnight, there likely will be more widespread black ice conditions Wednesday morning.

Travelers are asked NOT to call 911 or the State Highway Patrol for road conditions. The lines must remain clear for emergency calls.

You can find updated weather and road conditions on www.readync.org web site or with the new ReadyNC mobile app. The free app is available for iPhones and Android devices in the AppStore and Play Store; search “ReadyNC.”

If you must travel, the North Carolina Highway Patrol recommends following these safety tips:

- Reduce your speed. Driving at the regular speed limit will reduce your ability to control the car if you begin to slide.

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- Leave plenty of room between you and other vehicles.
- Bridges and overpasses accumulate ice first. Approach them with extreme caution and do not apply your brakes while on the bridge.
- If you do begin to slide, take your foot off the gas and turn the steering wheel IN THE DIRECTION OF THE SLIDE. Do NOT apply the brakes as that will cause further loss of control of the car.

While this storm is not expected to bring large amounts of snow and ice, nor cause widespread power outages, public safety officials said this is a good time to review winter safety tips:

- Keep alternative heating sources prepared. If you have a fireplace, store a good supply of dry, seasoned wood. Keep fire extinguishers on hand, and make sure your family knows how to use them
- Do not use charcoal grills or generators indoors; the fumes can be deadly.
- Turn off electrical appliances that were on when the power went off to avoid a power surge when the electricity is restored.
- Use flashlights. Do not use candles; they greatly increase the chance of having a fire in your home.
- Limit your activities to no more than two rooms and close off unneeded rooms.
- Stuff towels or rags in cracks under doors and cover windows at night to keep cold air out and warm air in.

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- If you have well water, fill up tubs and buckets with water so if the power goes out you still have water.
- Remember to eat and drink regularly. Food provides the body with energy to produce its own heat.
- Keep the body replenished with fluids to prevent dehydration.
- Wear layers of loose fitting, lightweight, warm clothing. Layering clothes keeps you warmer than a single layer of heavy clothing. Remove layers to avoid overheating, perspiration and subsequent chill.