

# WINTER STORMS

*Winter storms are one of the leading hazards in the Lehigh Valley.*



A CREATE Resilience Resource



## *The hazard...*

A winter storm is a weather system that forms at low temperatures in which the main types of precipitation are snow, sleet, or freezing rain.

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*“Make sure all community members are aware of the symptoms of hypothermia, the dangers of driving during a storm, and how to access emergency services that are available.”*

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Freezing rain can cause major tree damage and widespread power outages as it accumulates and weighs down everything it touches. Barely visible “black ice” forms on roads and walkways and is very dangerous to pedestrians and motorists.

## *The impacts...*

During winter storms, transportation disruptions can impact mobility and low temperatures can affect human health and property function. The risks include: hypothermia and frostbite when exposed to the cold for a long period of time, damage to home from falling branches, roof instability, frozen pipes, and generator issues, car accidents, cell phone service loss, and supply shortage.

## Some solutions...

Homeowners can make sure gutters are clean, hire a contractor to check roof stability, and cut hanging tree branches. Before a storm, individuals can make sure to follow weather forecasts, identify emergency routes, find shelter, and prepare a winter storm survival kit for home and car to stay safe. During a storm, it is advised to stay inside and off roads. For more on how to stay safe before, during, and after a winter storm check out

► <https://www.weather.gov/safety/winter-after>



*Remember to plan for all members of your home, including your pets, when preparing your storm survival kit.*

Communities can be prepared for storms by adopting a notification system such as Code Red or Nixle. Designated emergency snow routes and free parking garage access during the storms can keep drivers off the road. Shelters and warming centers can protect the homeless, and delivery service for elderly or disabled people can deliver necessary supplies if they are unable to get out during a storm. Make sure all community members are aware of the symptoms of hypothermia, the dangers of driving during a storm, and how to access emergency services that are available.

## Local examples...

**City of Easton:** maintains a page on their website about snow emergency operations. This includes regulations about being parked along emergency routes and free parking garage access for residents who live along the emergency routes. The page also includes information about other general snow operations and suggestions

► <https://www.easton-pa.com/public-works/pages/snow-emergency-winter-operations>

**City of Allentown:** set out on a rescue mission for the homeless in 2013. The city worked with shelters, churches, and agencies to provide food and shelter to homeless people during dangerously cold weather.

\* CREATE Resilience is a project of the Nurture Nature Center is a grant-funded project to educate and explore natural hazards and mitigation strategies in the local areas of Easton, Wilson and Bangor. For more information about the CREATE Resilience project visit: [www.nurturenaturecenter.org/](http://www.nurturenaturecenter.org/)



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