

COOK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



Toni Preckwinkle • President
Cook County Board of Commissioners

Warren L. Batts • Chairman
Cook County Health & Hospitals System

Jorge Ramirez • Vice-Chairman
Cook County Health & Hospitals System

William T. Foley • CEO
Cook County Health & Hospitals System

Health System Board Members

Dr. David A. Ansell
Commissioner Jerry Butler
David N. Carvalho
Quin R. Golden
Benn Greenspan
Sr. Sheila Lyne
Dr. Luis R. Muñoz
Heather E. O'Donnell
Andrea L. Zopp

For Immediate Release: January 20, 2011
Contact: Amy Poore: 708-906-1271

1010 West Lake Street, Suite 300
Oak Park, Illinois 60301
(708) 492-2000
TDD (708) 492-2002

Stephen A. Martin, Jr., Ph.D., MPH
Chief Operating Officer

Arctic temperatures expected tonight, residents advised to take precautions

Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) officials are advising residents to take precautions against the frigid temperatures expected in the coming days.

“The arctic-like temperatures expected this evening are dangerous and can lead to serious health issues such as frostbite, hypothermia, and heart problems if residents are not prepared,” said CCDPH chief operating officer, Stephen A. Martin, Jr., Ph.D., M.P.H.

CCDPH is advising residents to use common sense and follow these safety suggestions:

Dress for the cold:

- Wear a warm hat, and keep feet and hands warm and dry.
- Cover as much of your face as possible while outside, breathe through a scarf to warm air before it enters your lungs.
- Wear several layers of lightweight clothing, rather than one or two layers of heavy garments. The air between the garments acts as insulation to keep the body warmer.

Keep your vehicle prepared:

- Allow extra time when traveling. Monitor weather conditions carefully and adhere to travel advisories.
- Keep a winter storm kit in your car. This should include blankets, food, flares, chains, gloves and first aid supplies.

Stay prepared at home:

- Do not use an oven as a heating device. Read directions before using space heaters and other portable heating units.
- Make sure cracks in windows and doors are repaired. For a quick fix, use towels, rugs or newspapers.
- Have bottled water, canned foods, flashlights and batteries on hand in case a winter storm keeps you indoors.
- Residents who have no heat should check with their local municipality or township about warming centers.

Stay healthy:

- Seek medical attention immediately if you have these symptoms:
 1. **hypothermia:** confusion, dizziness, exhaustion and severe shivering
 2. **frostbite:** gray, white or yellow skin discoloration, numbness, waxy feeling skin
- Drink warm, caffeine-free, non-alcoholic beverages to stay warm and hydrated.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist about medications that could cause problems in cold weather.
- The elderly can be particularly vulnerable to extreme weather conditions; check often to make sure they are safe.

For more information contact CCDPH at 708-492-2000.

###