



OFFICE OF GOVERNOR PAT QUINN

NEWS

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Governor Quinn Ensures State Preparedness for Winter Storm

Governor Issues State Disaster Declaration Ahead of Storm

SPRINGFIELD – January 31, 2011. Governor Pat Quinn today announced that state agencies are working together to prepare for a large winter storm expected to hit the Midwest region starting today. Governor Quinn also issued a disaster declaration for the entire state in advance of the heavy snow, ice and blizzard conditions that are expected over the next few days.

“The entire Midwest region of the country is expected to be hit with a serious winter storm over the next few days, and it is important that we are prepared so that Illinois residents are safe and warm in the days ahead,” said Governor Quinn. “We will be increasing efforts to make sure that our roads are clear and that our most vulnerable residents are staying indoors and staying warm.”

Governor Quinn activated the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in Springfield this afternoon to coordinate the state’s response to the storm. Representatives from more than a dozen state agencies will man the SEOC 24 hours a day throughout the storm.

“We’re working closely with local emergency management officials throughout the state to monitor conditions and be ready to provide whatever assistance they may need,” said Joe Klinger, interim director of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA). “But it’s also important that people prepare themselves for this storm by stocking their homes with food, water, flashlights, radios and other necessities.”

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the Illinois State Police are encouraging drivers to use extra caution on roads and will be increasing efforts to keep motorists safe as driving conditions across the state become hazardous. Motorists can check the condition of Interstates by calling 1-800-452-IDOT (4368); or by visiting www.gettingaroundillinois.com and clicking on “Winter Road Conditions.”

The Illinois Department of Aging (IDoA) is taking steps to ensure the safety of senior citizens throughout Illinois. The department has notified providers that they should check on older adults to make sure they have food, water and medication in the event that the storm causes power outages. The IDoA also alerted provider agencies that have generators to make sure that they have fuel on-hand to run them.

The Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) will provide alternate sites for clients if their regular local office is inaccessible. The department also encourages Illinoisans to take advantage of more than 120 state facilities that serve as warming centers. For a list of participating centers, please visit www.keepwarm.illinois.gov. For information on facility closures, people should call ahead to their local offices for a pre- recorded instructional message. Patient facilities will continue operations throughout the storm.

For additional information about winter storm preparedness measures and important updates throughout the storm, visit the Ready Illinois Web site at www.Ready.Illinois.gov.