

News Release
For Immediate Release

Contact: Karen Kim (253) 377-2548 Cell
American Red Cross Mount Rainier Chapter

Red Cross Safety Tips for the Cold and Icy Weather

First Chill of Winter Predicted This Weekend

December 10, 2008— Exposure to cold can cause injury or serious illness such as frostbite or hypothermia. The likelihood of injury or illness depends on factors such as physical activity, clothing, wind, humidity, working and living conditions, and a person's age and state of health. The American Red Cross Mount Rainier Chapter offers these tips to stay safe in this weekend's cold weather:

- Dress appropriately before going outdoors. The air temperature does not have to be below freezing for someone to experience cold emergencies such as hypothermia and frostbite. Wind speed can create dangerously cold conditions even when the temperature is not that low.
- If possible, avoid being outside in the coldest part of the day, or for extended periods of time in extreme cold weather.
- Dress in layers so you can adjust to changing conditions. Avoid overdressing or overexertion that can lead to illness.
- Most of your body heat is lost through your head so wear a hat, preferably one that covers your ears.
- Mittens provide more warmth to your hands than gloves.
- Wear waterproof, insulated boots to help avoid hypothermia or frostbite by keeping your feet warm and dry and to maintain your footing in ice and snow.
- Take frequent breaks and stay hydrated.
- Get out of wet clothes immediately and warm the core body temperature with a blanket or warm fluids like hot cider or soup. Avoid drinking caffeine or alcohol if you expect you or someone you are trying to help has hypothermia or frostbite.
- Keep a winter storm survival kit in your car. Supplies should include sand or cat litter (for traction, shovel, rope tow, flares, chains, jumper cables, radio, flashlight with extra batteries, first aid supplies, gloves, clothing, blankets, food, and water.
- Prepare your vehicle. Winterize your car by taking it to a trusted mechanic, who will check things like the tires for appropriate pressure and tread, the cooling system, the battery, the wiper blades and washer fluid, etc.
- During the winter months, make sure to keep your gas tank near full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines. Keep extra blankets in the trunk in the event that you are stranded and have to wait for help.

The American Red Cross is a non-profit, humanitarian agency dedicated to helping make families and communities safer at home and around the world. For more information, visit www.rainier-redcross.org.

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Karen M. Kim
Public Relations

American Red Cross Mount Rainier Chapter

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Rebuilding Lives, Restoring Hope
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