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## FLORIDA HEALTH IN WALTON URGES SAFETY DURING WINTER WEATHER



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**DeFuniak Springs, Fla.**— The Florida Department of Health in Walton County urges Florida residents to take precautions to stay healthy and safe during extreme cold weather. With wind chills forecasted as low as 25 degrees this week in many areas of the state, it is important to take extra precautions.

Winter safety tips:

- Stay indoors as much as possible to keep healthy, safe and warm. Make sure to check on friends and family members and neighbors who are especially at risk from cold weather hazards: young children, older adults, and the chronically ill.
- For outside activities, dress in multiple layers of loose-fitting clothing. Don't forget to wear a hat, scarf and mittens, or other winter gear.
- Heat your home safely. If you plan to use a wood stove, fireplace, or space heater, be extremely careful. Make sure each appliance is properly adjusted and you have followed the manufacturer's instructions and local building codes for use.
- Prevent carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning by never using generators, charcoal grills or gas grills indoors and by installing a CO detector to alert you of the presence of the deadly, odorless, colorless gas.
- As temperatures dip below freezing, leave your home's water taps slightly open so they drip continuously.
- Eat well-balanced meals to stay warmer. Avoid drinking alcoholic beverages—they cause your body to lose heat more rapidly. Instead, drink warm beverages such as hot chocolate or hot tea to help maintain your body temperature. If you have any dietary restrictions, consult your doctor.
- Bring pets out of the cold weather and provide them warm shelter.
- Cold weather can displace wild animals. Stay clear of wild or feral animals including cats, bats or raccoons especially if they look sick or appear injured. They could have rabies and hurt animals can also injure you.

For more information on winter weather safety, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [Winter Weather Preparedness](#) page.

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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