

What You Need to Know Ahead of Snow Season



How can I Prepare for Winter Weather?

- **Help Residents in Need:** Call 311 or the shelter hotline at **(202)-399-7093** to request accessible shelter transport for individuals experiencing homelessness, who may have disabilities, other access and/or functional needs, and are outside. The District opens additional Hypothermia Overflow Shelters to ensure there are warm, safe places to be for anyone.
- **Family, pets, home:** Keep plenty of water, food, and medications on hand; have winter clothing ready like coats, boots, gloves, hats, and scarves; and bring pets inside and call Humane Rescue Alliance at **(202) 723-5730** if you see pets left outdoors.
- **Outside your property:** Before a snow event, residents and commercial property owners should apply abrasives such as rock salt, de-icer, or non-clumping kitty litter to the sidewalks around their properties to reduce the possibility of icing and to prevent slips and falls.
- **Inside your property:** Have your furnace, chimney, and flue checked by professionals, make sure your smoke and CO2 detectors have fresh batteries and caulk and weather strip windows and doors.
- **Your vehicle:** Keep your gas tank full and your battery fully charged and keep scrapers in your vehicle to remove snow from windshields and windows.

How Do I Get Updates on Winter Weather Events?

- **Sign up for real-time alerts** at alert.dc.gov. You can also check social media at [X.com/AlertDC](https://twitter.com/AlertDC).
- **Snow emergency status:** Go to snow.dc.gov or check local media for notices that a snow emergency has been called and lifted.
- **Metro service impacts:** Visit wmata.com/service/status or call the Metro Customer Information Center at **(202) 637-7000**.
- **Hypothermia alerts:** Updates are shared through AlertDC and are posted on at dhs.dc.gov.



What is a Snow Emergency?

The Mayor declares a snow emergency based on a forecast of significant snowfall, accumulation speed, and time of day.

Motorists cannot park on snow emergency routes, indicated by red and white signs along larger commercial streets, while the emergency is in effect so that snowplows can clear these streets curb-to-curb.

Vehicles parked on such routes can be ticketed and towed. If towed, call the Towed Vehicle Locator office at **(202) 541-6083** or visit dpw.dc.gov/service/locate-towed-vehicle.

What You Need to Know Ahead of Snow Season



When does the District Snow Team deploy?

Mayor Bowser deploys the District Snow Team based on findings from various sources, including the National Weather Service, as follows:

In advance of a winter weather event: The team pre-treats the roadways with a solution of salt, brine, and beet juice.

During a winter weather event: The team deploys snowplows to clear roadways.

What steps should residents and businesses take when traveling on roadways?

Take Metro as an alternative to driving. If you must drive:

- Drive cautiously and maintain safe speeds and distances from other vehicles, particularly emergency and snow vehicles.
- Use caution when attempting to pass a snowplow so drivers have enough room to safely do their jobs.
- Drive carefully on bridges, ramps, and other elevated structures as they tend to freeze faster than roadways.

When do I need to shovel my sidewalk?

After a winter weather event: Residents must clear their sidewalks and curb cuts in 24 hours of a snowstorm's end. Commercial property owners are to clear their sidewalks within eight hours of a snowstorm's end.

Exemption for seniors and residents with access and functional needs: You may be exempt from the snow shoveling requirement if you live in your own home and are 65 years or older and/or a person with a disability. To apply for the 2024-2025 exemptions, visit shovelexemption.dpw.dc.gov.

How is trash, recycling and leaf collection affected?

Winter weather events can cause delays or modifications to the Department of Public Works (DPW) standard operations, including leaf and sanitation collection. When snow, freezing rain or ice is forecasted, the District Snow Team (DST) hits the streets to salt and pretreat roads. This necessitates switching equipment and crews used for leaf collection to snow duties, which unfortunately causes delays.

How can I support my neighbors this winter?

Join ServeDC's Volunteer Snow Team to help remove ice and snow at the homes of seniors and residents with access and functional needs. Sign up at servedc.galaxydigital.com/snow-team/.

