

Press release: Winter survival tips from Lake Dillon Fire-Rescue



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

10 January 2017

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Winter survival tips from Lake Dillon Fire-Rescue

With this week's heavy snowfall, the crews at Lake Dillon Fire would like to offer some reminders about how best to cope, stay safe and survive.

- Test your smoke detectors and carbon-monoxide detectors once a month, especially if you heat your home with a gas furnace or a stove that burns wood or pellets.
- Maintain a three-foot diameter around space heaters that is cleared of all combustible materials, including drapes and furniture.

- Make sure that your chimney has been cleaned by a certified chimney sweep annually.
- Help us help you by digging out fire hydrants in your neighborhood.
- Similarly, dig out your gas hydrants so that they are not buried in the snow, where dangerous accumulations of fumes can build up.
- Use caution underneath building eaves, especially those on which snow cornices have developed or those with metal roofs, since “roof avalanches” are a distinct danger.
- Consider hiring a licensed, bonded contractor to remove heavy snow accumulation from your roof, and do not allow snow to build up enough to threaten collapse. Also, ensure that roof ventilation pipes are kept clear of snow.
- Tires should be rated for mud and snow at the least, and motorists should consider studded snow tires for winter driving. Check your vehicle’s anti-freeze and wiper fluid (buy the brands that don’t freeze), as well as all other fluid levels in the vehicle. Keep your gas tank at least half full at all times. And check that your vehicle’s battery has adequate charge.
- Check the weather forecast and highway conditions before traveling, and do not travel in a storm if it is not necessary. Be particularly cautious on wet and slushy roads. Also, recognize that with snow plows leaving behind high berms of snow, it may not be easy to see traffic at intersections. Ease out cautiously until you clearly can view the lanes.
- Always wear your seat belts. Maintain safe driving speeds and appropriate following distances for conditions. Leave extra room for stopping. Use your turn signals. Do not make any abrupt changes in directions or speeds. Drive predictably.
- Slow down and move over whenever encountering emergency vehicles. This is the law, and the consequences of not

doing so are severe – not just the risk of getting an expensive citation, but also by endangering firefighters, law-enforcement officers, paramedics and tow-truck drivers.

- Avoid times of heavy traffic on the roadways whenever possible. The local grocery stores are far less crowded before 7 a.m. or after 8 p.m.
- Equip your car with a winter-survival kit that includes tire chains, kitty litter (for traction), a snow shovel, a tow strap, jumper cables, road flares and extra winter clothing or a sleeping bag in case you slide off the road. Also, keep a mobile-phone charger in the vehicle. If you are stranded in your vehicle, try to signal others with your emergency flashers and horn. Run the engine only 10 minutes out of every 30 to keep warm inside while conserving fuel. Make sure that the tailpipe is not blocked by snow.
- Use traction devices such as YakTrax for your shoes. Slips and falls are among the leading causes of injuries to people of all ages in Summit County at this time of year.
- When moving large amounts of snow, use a smaller shovel to avoid lifting heavy loads.

“Winter can be the best time to be in Summit County, but it’s often challenging,” said Lake Dillon Fire Chief Jeff Berino. “We would encourage everyone to consider safety first and foremost during what is shaping up to be a fantastic year for snow.”