

# SNOW DISASTER RESPONSE

## **Background:**

In the District, you can expect some accumulation of snow during the winter months. Small amounts of snow can create slippery conditions on the roads and heavy amounts of snow can create dangerous driving conditions, blocked roads and power outages throughout the city. Snow in conjunction with gusty winds can significantly reduce visibility, therefore, motorists are urged to use extreme caution when these conditions are present.

In general, you should know the difference between an **advisory** and a **warning**.

- A **snow ADVISORY** means that snow is expected to occur and may accumulate.
- A **snow WARNING** means that heavy amounts of snow are occurring or are imminent.

## **Snow Advisory or Warning:**

- Listen to your radio, television or NOAA Weather Radio for weather reports and emergency information.
- Have an emergency “go-kit” in your home and car. Visit [www.72hours.dc.gov](http://www.72hours.dc.gov) to learn how to make a go-kit.
- Drive only if it is absolutely necessary. If you must drive, consider the following:
  - Travel during the day and keep others informed of your schedule.
  - Stay on main roads; avoid back roads and alleys.
- If a snow emergency is declared, DO NOT park your car on Snow Emergency Routes. Vehicles parked on these streets are subject to a \$250 fine and or/towing.
- Clear snow and ice from sidewalks and steps next to your home and/or business. D.C. law requires residents to remove snow from sidewalks and steps within eight hours of daylight after the snow stops.
- Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow. Overexertion can bring on a heart attack—a major cause of death during the winter.
- Watch for signs of **frostbite**-- Skin appears white and waxy, numbness or no feeling in that area and/or possible blisters.
- Watch for signs of **hypothermia**-- Shivering and numbness, confusion or dizziness, stumbling and weakness, slow or slurred speech and shock.
- If you notice a homeless person stranded in the cold, call the Hypothermia Hotline at (202) 399-7093. Vans will transport homeless individuals to a shelter.
- If you or someone you know is experiencing signs of hypothermia or frostbite go to a medical facility immediately.

