

GEORGE LATIMER, Westchester County Executive

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAFETY ADVICE FROM THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT TO HELP WESTCHESTER RESIDENTS WEATHER THE STORM

(White Plains, NY) - Westchester County Executive George Latimer shared important health and safety advice today to help residents manage the aftermath of the Friday Nor'easter and prepare for the next storm expected to bring snow Tuesday night through Wednesday.

County Executive George Latimer said: "Residents in Westchester have been severely let down by their power companies in the wake of Winter Storm Riley, and with another storm expected to hit Westchester tonight, it is important to exercise caution and heed the advice from our Health Department in an effort to keep you and your loved ones safe and secure."

For those who remain without power, check with your municipality for the location and hours of shelters and warming centers or visit the County's Twitter or Facebook pages. The County has also made the County Center available for residents for warmth, coffee and entertainment.

Health Commissioner Sherlita Amler, MD added: "Low temperatures can be life-threatening, especially for seniors, infants and people who are at increased risk for hypothermia. Dress warmly in layers, and if a safe temperature cannot be maintained in your home, make temporary arrangements to stay elsewhere."

More tips on storm safety are available at www.westchestergov.com/health and below:

Safe Generator and Alternate Heating Source Use

Strictly follow the manufacturer's instructions to avoid a deadly indoor buildup of carbon monoxide and only use heating and cooking appliances inside your home that are designed for indoor use. Never use a natural gas, propane camp stove, barbecue or gas range to heat your home.

Never use a generator indoors or in partly enclosed areas such as garages, basements, porches, crawlspaces, sheds, carports or breezeways. Generators should only be operated outside, downwind and away from open windows.

Early warning signs of CO² poisoning are nausea, vomiting, headache, confusion, sleepiness and dizziness.

- Never place a space heater within three feet of drapes, furniture or bedding, on top of furniture or near water, and never cover your space heater.
- Never leave children or pets unattended near a space heater, fireplace or wood burning stove.

Chain saw safety

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions. Wear safety goggles and protective clothing. Be sure bystanders are a safe distance away.
- Avoid contact with power lines.
- Take extra care in cutting trees or branches that are bent or caught under something else.
- Use extreme caution to avoid electrical shock when using an electric chain saw.

Food Safety When You Lose Power

- During a prolonged power outage, food is potentially hazardous if not stored below 41 degrees Fahrenheit. Check your refrigerator thermometer before eating food from it after an outage. Examples of foods that should be discarded if not properly chilled are meat, poultry, seafood, cold cuts, hot dogs, eggs, and dairy products. When in doubt, throw it out.

Before the next storm arrives:

- Stock up on essentials such as bread, milk, diapers, batteries for flash lights and needed medications.
- Keep flashlights and battery-powered radios where you can easily find them.
- Keep cell phones and other important electronic devices fully charged.
- Turn the freezer and refrigerator to the highest setting. This will preserve food longer if power goes out.
- Assemble a three-day supply of water and non-perishable foods, extra clothing and blankets. Have a go-bag ready in case you must leave your home.

During the storm:

- Stay off the roads.
- Never walk or drive close to snow plows; the driver may not see you.
- Never go near, or drive over, downed power lines.

If the power goes out:

- Call your local utility company to inform it of the power outage. Con Edison's 24-hour hotline is 1-800-75-CONED (752-6633) and NYSEG's hotline service is 1-800-572-1131.
- Leave a light on to let you know when power has been restored.
- Use flashlights or battery-operated lanterns. Candles are a fire hazard.
- Keep your refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.

After the storm:

- Dress warmly in windproof clothing to prevent frostbite and hypothermia.
- Wear several layers of loose-fitting clothing to trap body heat. Remember gloves, scarves and a hat that covers the ears

- Senior citizens, people with asthma, heart or chronic lung disease should not shovel. Others should shovel snow in moderation and go indoors if you feel your hands and feet getting cold or numb.
- Never start or operate a snow blower or chain saw in your garage.
- Clear the area around hydrants near your property, if possible. Avoid shovelling snow into the street.
- Before driving, clear snow from your car roof and windows to avoid creating a hazard for other drivers.
- Be on the lookout for falling ice and snow from roofs and gutters. When a lot of heavy snow and ice has accumulated on roofs, do not stand under structures that are not well-supported.

About Westchester County

Westchester County, located in the heart of the historic Hudson Valley, covers 500 square miles and has a population of just under a million. Originally home to Native Americans, who were members of the Lenape tribe, it is today a rich mix of many cultures and landscapes. The County is a blend of bustling cities, quaint villages and picturesque towns as well as open spaces and a network of beautiful parks. Westchester is made up of 6 cities, 19 towns and 20 villages. Westchester County is known for top-notch public schools, and a high quality of life. The County is also an intellectual capital, boasting a highly educated workforce, competitive colleges and universities, Fortune 500 companies, world changing non-profits, and cutting-edge research centers. Westchester is led by County Executive George Latimer, who took office in January 2018 as the ninth County Executive. Using inclusion and openness as a foreground, Latimer is fighting to make Westchester a destination for all people to live, work and enjoy. Learn more about Westchester County by visiting www.westchestergov.com

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