



Gov. Pritzker Issues Disaster Proclamation Following Significant Winter Storm

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SPRINGFIELD – Governor JB Pritzker issued a disaster proclamation for all 102 counties in response to the dangerous winter storm that has blanketed the state with life-threatening wind chills, power outages and accumulating snow. The extreme arctic temperatures affecting more than ten states adds additional stress on utility providers across the nation. As of 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, approximately 7,000 Illinois households were without power, and that number is expected to fluctuate as the strain of arctic temperatures and extreme weather continues. To alleviate stress on the nation’s grid, all Illinois residents are encouraged to take appropriate measures to safely conserve energy.

“I have directed my administration to use all resources at our disposal to keep our communities safe amid dangerous and ongoing winter weather,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “We are in communication with local governments to ensure they have the support they need in disaster response and recovery operations. We are also working with our federal partners to pursue federal assistance to help communities recover and to do what we can to protect ratepayers from soaring utility bills. I urge all Illinoisans to take this extreme weather seriously, avoid all unnecessary travel and check in on your neighbors.”

Extreme weather has resulted in frozen wells in key natural gas producing states, including Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas. The sub-zero temperatures are resulting in increased demand and decreased supply, causing natural gas prices to spike. Utility companies across the nation are reporting soaring wholesale costs, and without federal intervention, those increased prices could result in higher utility bills for Illinois residents in the coming weeks.

“Proper home heating is a critical issue during the winter months, and over time has

proven deadly for many families,” said IEMA Director Alicia Tate-Nadeau. “If using an alternative heating source during this extreme weather, take a moment to ensure that your carbon monoxide detector is working properly. The proper safety precautions can save lives during extreme weather.”

The Illinois Emergency Management Agency is offering the following tips to help households conserve energy while keeping winter safety a priority.

WINTERIZE YOUR HOME: Winterize your home to extend your fuel supply

- Insulate walls and attics
- Caulk and weatherize doors and windows
- Hang blankets over windows at night but let the sunshine in during the day
- Cover cracks around doors with rugs, newspapers, towels or other such material

WHEN AT HOME: Safely conserve energy

- Stay indoors in a heated room as much as possible
- If you have no heat, close doors and vents in unused rooms and shut the doors
- Turn down your home’s thermostat just a few degrees and bundle up with layers or a thick blanket
- Lower the temperature on your home water heater a few degrees
- Avoid using large appliances such as dishwashers, washing machines, or dryers
- Reverse your ceiling fan to turn clockwise, producing an updraft that will move the warm air that collects near your ceiling down to the rest of the room
- If using alternative heat from a fireplace, wood stove, space heater, etc., use safeguards and ensure proper ventilation to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning

Over the course of the next few days, Governor Pritzker encourages all Illinoisans to check on their neighbors, especially elderly neighbors who may need assistance.

Statistics show 46 percent of individuals expect to rely on the people in their neighborhood for assistance within the first 72 hours after an emergency or disaster. If you are unable to get in touch with your neighbor, or if you are worried, please contact your local law enforcement for a welfare check.

More tips for staying safe at home and on the road are available in a [Winter Weather Preparedness Guide](#) developed by IEMA and the National Weather Service. This guide is available, in digital form, on the Ready Illinois website at www.Ready.Illinois.gov.