

# Cold Weather Plan for England 2012: Action cards for Cold Weather Alert Service

## Individuals

### **Level 0 Long-term planning *All year***

- Access appropriate energy advice about improving the energy efficiency of your home and staying warm in winter. Protect water pipes from freezing if possible
- Undertake energy efficiency improvements to your home or encourage your landlord to do so
- Seek advice from your local authority environmental health department if as a tenant your heating is defective or you cannot affordably heat your home
- Seek income maximisation advice – to access benefits and other services
- Seek advice from your fuel supplier or local advice provider if you have fuel debt or difficulties paying for or affording sufficient fuel
- Ask your fuel supplier if they operate a Priority Service Register for vulnerable customers; find out what this provides; and ask if you are eligible
- Have all gas, solid-fuel and oil-burning appliances (i.e. boilers, heaters, cookers) serviced by an appropriately registered engineer to prevent breakdown. Malfunctioning appliances can release carbon monoxide – a gas which at high levels will kill. Have flues and chimneys checked for blockages and swept if needed
- Fit an audible carbon monoxide alarm which is EN50291-compliant (see Figure 3.4, Cold Weather Plan)

### **Level 1 Winter preparedness programme *1 November–31 March***

- Find good information about health risks, try NHS Choices at [www.nhs.uk/](http://www.nhs.uk/)
- Check your entitlements and benefits
- Get a flu jab if you are in a risk group
- Protect water pipes from freezing by insulating them – seek energy advice where needed
- Draught-proof around windows or doors – seek energy advice on this. Avoid blocking ventilation points in the home
- Check that your heating is working properly
- Make sure that you have access to sufficient fuel supplies for the winter period, especially if you rely on oil, LPG or wood deliveries. Consider alternative heating measures if required
- If you are receiving social care or health services, ask your GP, key worker or other contact about staying healthy in winter and the services available to you
- Make sure you have a list of emergency numbers if you need to call for assistance or advice during cold weather
- Look out for vulnerable neighbours and help them prepare for winter (e.g. provide them with key contact numbers for emergency situations)
- Consider other preventive action you can take (e.g. perhaps volunteering to help implement the community emergency plan)

# Cold Weather Plan for England: Action cards for Cold Weather Alert Service

## Level 2 Severe winter weather is forecast – Alert and readiness

**Mean temperature of 2°C and/or widespread ice and heavy snow are predicted within 48 hours, with 60% confidence**

- Maintain regular contact with vulnerable people and neighbours you know to be at risk in cold weather – ensure they have access to warm food and drinks and are managing to heat their home adequately
- Stay tuned to the weather forecast. Ensure you are stocked with food and medications in advance (have deliveries or ask a friend to help)
- Take the weather into account when planning your activity over the following days. Avoid exposing yourself to cold or icy outdoor conditions if you are at a higher risk of cold-related illness or falls
- If you or someone else is likely to be restricted to one room during the winter period or during a cold spell, make sure that it can be kept at or above the recommended temperature and that you plan what resources you/they will need to keep them safe and warm. Seek energy advice as necessary
- Check ambient room temperatures – especially those rooms where disabled or vulnerable people spend most of their time (see Figure 3.2, Cold Weather Plan)
- Discuss with friends and neighbours about clearing snow and ice from the front of your house and public walkways nearby, if you are unable to do this yourself

## Level 3 Response to severe winter weather – Severe weather action

**Severe winter weather is now occurring: mean temperature of 2°C or less and/or widespread ice and heavy snow**

- Stay tuned to the weather forecast
- Check and maintain daytime room temperature at 21°C
- Check bedroom night-time temperature and maintain it at 18°C or warmer
- If you have to go out, make sure you dress warmly and wear non-slip shoes. Also tell someone where you are going and let them know when you get back. If you have a mobile phone, keep it charged and on you at all times
- Keep active
- Dress warmly, eat warm food and take warm drinks regularly
- Check on those you know are at risk
- If you are concerned about your own health or welfare or that of others, alert the emergency services
- Clear pavements of ice or snow if you are able and if essential\*

## Level 4 Major incident – Emergency response

**Central Government will declare a Level 4 alert in the event of severe or prolonged cold weather affecting sectors other than health**

- Follow key public health and weather alerts messages as broadcast on the media

\*Gov.UK (2012) Request snow clearance from a road, path or cycleway  
<https://www.gov.uk/request-snow-clearance> (accessed 19 October 2012)