

Winter Preparations and Cautions

Winter is upon us. There are many things every family should know which can make it much easier for you to weather the storms. Here are some basic pointers:

- Keep your emergency supplies up to date. Have food & water for at least 7 days on hand at all times. Keep a 7-day supply of special medications with your supplies. Store your emergency supplies in large plastic containers so you can transport them with you if you need to leave your home.
- Keep a portable radio readily available and have lots of extra batteries. Tune to 1620 AM for your Milpitas emergency radio station. 1620 AM will provide you with updated emergency information.
- NEVER approach a downed wire. Even in a power outage, assume they are charged with electricity.
- Sandbags are available to Milpitas residents free of charge. They can be obtained at the Milpitas Sports Center near the football field entrance. The bags and sand are provided, but you must fill the bags yourself and bring your own shovel. Only fill the bags to half their capacity, otherwise they can be too heavy to lift.
- Have at least two alternative meeting places for your family in the event storm conditions, such as downed power lines, flooded streets or fallen trees prevent you from being able to get home. Make these alternative meeting places easy to get to by roads or public transportation, such as the entrance to the Great Mall near the Transit Plaza.
- Canals and creeks traverse several areas of Milpitas. In severe weather conditions, some areas of town could experience flooding. Contact your Milpitas Engineering Department at (408) 586-3327 to determine if your home is in a possible flood zone.
- NEVER try to walk or drive across moving or standing water. Find another way to get where you're going.
- Keep valuable papers and documents on a high shelf in a waterproof container that is easy to retrieve in the event floods require you to evacuate.
- Cooler winter weather means we will be using our heaters and furnaces. Replace your furnace filter. Vacuum the areas on and around your furnace. Remember to keep any flammable materials, such as clothes, cardboard or paper items at least 36" away from your furnace or water heater.

- If you use portable space heaters, also keep these at least 36” away from anything flammable such as curtains or blankets. NEVER drape anything over or near a space heater, such as wet clothing.
- In the event areas of Milpitas are evacuated, the Milpitas Sports Center, located on Calaveras Blvd. near Park Victoria is the City care & shelter facility.
- Keep your cell phone charged. Remember, cordless phones may not work during a power outage. Have at least one phone that is not cordless and directly wired to a phone outlet.
- Make sure your garage door has an emergency release so you can open the door when the electrical power is out.
- Keep drains and rain gutters clear of debris, such as leaves or pine needles.
- If you use your fireplace regularly, have it cleaned and checked by a professional at least once a year.

Your Milpitas Fire Department offers emergency training for citizens. Contact the Director of Emergency Services at (408) 586-2810 for more information.