



**ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT**  
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**NEWS RELEASE** *for Immediate Release*

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**December 20, 2023, 1 p.m.**

**Winter is coming - Have you checked your preparedness list twice?**

**LEONARDTOWN, MD** – Santa's making his list and checking it twice – and you should too! St. Mary's County Government's Department of Emergency Services encourages all residents to double check their emergency preparedness checklist to ensure they are ready for winter.

Prolonged cold conditions and winter storms raise the risk of freezing home plumbing, community water main breaks, automobile failures, transportation interruptions, automobile accidents, power outages, home heating system failures, hypothermia, and more.

**Winter Readiness Checklist:**

- Make emergency kits:** [www.stmaryscountymd.gov/kit](http://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/kit)
  - *Home Kit:* include a flashlight, batteries, extra blankets, warm clothing, a battery-operated radio, food that is easy to open and prepare, and clean drinking water.
  - *Car Kit:* add jumper cables, sand, and a first aid kit, and keep your gas tank full.
- Have a plan:** [www.stmaryscountymd.gov/plan](http://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/plan)
  - Identify a safe, warm place to go, and a way to get there if it becomes unsafe to stay in your home.
  - Discuss with loved ones how you will communicate before, during, and after a potential emergency or winter weather event.
- Sign up for local emergency notifications at:** [www.stmaryscountymd.gov/CodeRed](http://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/CodeRed)
- Cold weather basics:**
  - Know where the main valves and switches are for gas, water, and electricity – and ensure someone you trust can operate them if you need to shut them off.
  - Check on your neighbors, friends, and family members, especially if they are elderly and/or have functional needs.
  - Bring pets indoors when temperatures drop.

Knowing what to do before, during, and after an emergency is a critical part of being prepared and may make all the difference, when seconds count.

Visit [www.stmaryscountymd.gov/prepare](http://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/prepare) for additional preparedness tips and information.

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