



## Winter in Lambton County can be fun – but also full of surprises!

Most snow storms here only result in cancelled school buses or increased travel times (and more snow to shovel!). But that doesn't mean a major ice storm or blizzard won't happen here. That's why it's a good idea to make preparations at home now - *before* an emergency happens! Read this fact sheet to get tips on preparing for winter...

### Emergencies can happen anytime... That's why it makes good sense to be prepared all year 'round!

- Prepare to take care of yourself for at least 72 hours (3 days), even if there is no water, gas or hydro. Include a supply of food and water for each household member. (Don't forget pets!)
- Know the specific hazards and risks in your home and community, and think of preparations you can make in case of an emergency.
- Have an out-of-town contact you can check in with.

### Germs... You're all washed up!



Did you know that cold viruses can live on surfaces such as doorknobs and handrails for up to 6 hours, and flu viruses for up to 48 hours?

A lot of different germs can "hitchhike" on our hands. Germs can cause flu or colds when dirty hands touch a nose or mouth, or eyes. Hand washing is the easiest way to prevent the spread of germs.

Germs can also be spread through the air, so coughing into your sleeve or covering your nose and mouth with a tissue will "catch" germs and prevent them from being spread to other people or objects. Don't forget to wash your hands after you dispose of the dirty tissue.

For more information, contact the County of Lambton Community Health Services Department at: 519-383-8331 or toll free: 1-800-667-1839, or go to their website: [www.lambtonhealth.on.ca/communicable/handwashing.asp](http://www.lambtonhealth.on.ca/communicable/handwashing.asp)

### Would YOU know what to do during a winter power failure?

If the electricity goes out, the loss of heating may be one of your biggest concerns. NEVER use barbeques or outdoor heaters to heat your home or cook indoors. These appliances give off odourless but deadly carbon monoxide. If you cannot go somewhere else with heat, stay indoors and dress warmly.

- Report power outages by contacting your local supplier - **Do not call 9-1-1** unless you or someone nearby needs help – either from police, fire or ambulance.
- Do not use the telephone unless it is absolutely necessary.
- Listen to local radio broadcasts (on your battery-powered radio) to get information.
- If you must travel, use caution.
- Turn off electrical equipment - power can be restored more easily when the system isn't overloaded.
- Do not open your fridge or freezer unless absolutely necessary.
- Discard thawed food that has been at room temperature for more than 2 hours.
- Check on elderly or disabled neighbours.
- Conserve water (you may want to drain water from the plumbing system to prevent waterline damage).
- Use proper candleholders and never leave candles or lanterns unattended.
- Give the electrical system a chance to stabilize before reconnecting and turning on tools and appliances.
- Tune to one of the following local radio stations to obtain emergency information and further instructions from local public authorities: 1070 AM, 99.9 FM, 103.9 FM or 106.3 FM.



**Heart Alert!!! Your heart works harder in the cold to keep your body warm – physical exertion places additional strain on the heart, so take it easy when shovelling or working outside in the winter!**



County of Lambton  
Phone: 519-845-0801  
Toll-free: 1-866-324-6912  
[www.lambtononline.com/emergency\\_preparedness](http://www.lambtononline.com/emergency_preparedness)

For more information about emergency preparedness, you can also go to:  
[www.emergencymanagementontario.ca](http://www.emergencymanagementontario.ca)  
and:  
[www.publicsafety.gc.ca](http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca)

### The 72-Hour Emergency Supplies Kit (That's 3 days!)

One of the best ways to be prepared for emergencies is to have enough supplies to feed and take care of you and your family for at least 72 hours. If you and your family can take care of yourselves for the first hours following a disaster, emergency officials can help those in greater need.

Do you have these crucial items on hand?

- Flashlight & Batteries (in case the lights go out).
- Radio & Batteries or Crank Radio.
- Spare Batteries (for flashlight or battery operated radio).
- First Aid Kit.
- Candles and Waterproof Matches/Lighter.
- Extra Car Keys & Cash (including coins for pay telephones).
- Important Papers (identification for everyone, personal documents).
- Canned or dry foods that are easy to prepare, or don't have to be cooked... pre-packaged freeze-dried meals and MRE's ("Meals-Ready-to-Eat") are options too.
- Bottled Water (at least four litres per person per day).
- Disposable Knives, Forks, Spoons Cups & Plates & Plastic Garbage Bags.
- Fuel Stove and Fuel (Don't use barbecues or propane lanterns etc. indoors!).
- Toilet Paper, Diapers & Other Personal Supplies.
- Medication, Eyeglasses, Copies of Prescriptions.
- Whistle (in case you need to attract someone's attention).
- Playing Cards, Games and Toys.
- Supplies Kit Container (so you can take your supplies if you have to evacuate).



**Fact:** The Eastern Ontario / Quebec Ice Storm happened just over 10 years ago - in January of 1998 and resulted in an economic loss of nearly 7 billion dollars!

**Fact:** The largest snowflake on record fell in Montana in January of 1887 and was 38cm (15in) in diameter!

**Fact:** Seasonal flu occurs every winter, and some strains can be very serious for the elderly, the very young and people with weakened immune systems.

**Fact:** Each snowflake is made up of from 2 to about 200 separate ice crystals.

### On the Road



Local police will often advise people to remain at home if they don't **have** to go out – that's good advice! **Did you know the leading cause of death during winter storms is from traffic accidents?** If you have to go out in bad weather, adjust your driving to account for road conditions – that often means **slowing down**.

Check local weather & road condition reports before setting out on a trip. If travelling long distances, call ahead to your destination for conditions. If the weather and travelling conditions are poor, delay your trip if possible. Give road crews an opportunity to clear the way.

**Prepare a winter driving kit & keep the following items in your vehicle:**

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|--|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shovel                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emergency food pack                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> First aid kit                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Booster cables           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sand, kitty litter or traction mats | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tow chain                      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ice scraper & snow brush | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fuel line antifreeze                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Winter windshield washer fluid |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compass                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Matches and a "survival candle"     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Road maps                      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cloth or paper towels    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Extra clothing, heavy socks & boots | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> "Survival" blanket             |

Visit [www.weatheroffice.gc.ca](http://www.weatheroffice.gc.ca) or telephone 519-464-5121 for local weather conditions.

Visit [www.mto.gov.on.ca](http://www.mto.gov.on.ca) and look under the heading, Traveller's Information to obtain information about Provincial Highway conditions and road closures.

**Know the ice...** The colour of ice may be an indication of its strength: clear "blue ice" is the strongest; "white ice" is half as strong as "blue ice", and; "grey ice" is unsafe - the greyness indicates the presence of water!

**Ice thickness...** Ice is unpredictable, and thickness will vary from one location to another. The minimum required thickness depends on a **lot** of different factors, but here are some *guidelines* : 15cm is OK for walking or skating in small groups; 20cm is good for larger groups, and; at least 25cm is necessary for snowmobiles. If in doubt though, stay off the ice and always stay away from open water.

**Interesting fact** - If you poured a cup of water out a window with the outside air temperature at -40°C, the water would freeze before it reached the ground! (Did you know that -40°C converts to -40°F?)