



News Brief

Provided by:
Brady, Chapman, Holland & Associates

Texas Winter Storm Safety

Severe winter weather is wreaking havoc on the state of Texas—accompanied by record-low temperatures, snow and ice. These conditions have resulted in serious safety implications for many Texans.

Namely, this weather—combined with natural gas shortages, frozen wind turbines and individuals using more energy than usual to keep their homes warm—caused the state's power grid to fail earlier this week, leaving millions of individuals without heat or electricity in the midst of dangerously low temperatures. State officials have recently confirmed that the outages are likely to last for several more days, potentially keeping some Texans without power for much of the week.

What's worse, hazardous road conditions across the state due to snow and ice buildup have forced many individuals to remain in their homes, despite the lack of heat or electricity. As such, it's important for Texans affected by these storms to practice the [following precautions](#) to stay safe and warm at home:

- **Be cautious with generators.** These devices create deadly fumes and contribute to carbon monoxide poisoning if used incorrectly. Generators—which must only be used outside—should be kept dry and remain at least 20 feet away from windows, doors and vents. From there, you can plug appliances into a generator with heavy-duty outdoor extension cords.
- **Maintain household heat.** Conserve the heat in your home by keeping all doors and windows closed. In addition, close any drapes or blinds, and use spare towels to fill door gaps and keep cold air from traveling inside.
- **Use adequate light sources.** Light your home with battery-powered flashlights or lanterns. Use candles as a last resort, but never leave them unattended.
- **Keep water flowing.** To prevent your home's pipes from freezing or breaking, turn your water faucets on just enough to allow for a

continuous drip. Keep the cabinet doors under sinks open to ensure any warm air in the room reaches the pipes. If pipe problems do occur, use any bottled water or safe liquids you have for hydration. If no other water is available, melted snow can be used as an emergency water source.

- **Ensure food safety.** Keep your fridge and freezer doors closed as much as possible to help preserve perishable foods. Never consume food that shows signs of spoilage (e.g., an off smell, color or texture).
- **Know the signs.** Seek immediate medical care if you or another household member displays signs of frostbite or hypothermia (e.g., shivering, confusion, numbness, pain when rewarming the skin or a whitish-yellow tint to the skin).
- **Stay inside.** Remain indoors and off the roads as much as possible. If you must go outside, do so in short increments and dress in warm layers. If you must drive, take your cellphone with you and pack an emergency kit.

Lastly, stranded motorists and any other individuals in dire need of warmth are encouraged to go to one of the state's warming shelters. To find the nearest warming shelter, [click here](#).