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For Immediate Release



EXTREME WEATHER TASK FORCE URGES THE PUBLIC TO STAY SAFE AND BE A "BUDDY"

HELP BY DONATING A BLANKET

El Paso, Texas: With the freezing temperature that we are experiencing it is essential for the public to use precautions and keep safe. Not only should we worry about keeping ourselves safe, but help us keep everybody safe by being a "Buddy" to the ones listed below.

- Elderly living alone
- Disabled individuals living alone
- Pets (*especially "outdoor" pets*)

"BUDDY SYSTEM" - If you know an older person, even one living with another older person, make contact either by phone or in person. Some questions to ask them:

- How are you keeping warm?
- Do you have layers of clothing on?
- Do you have enough blankets?
- Have you been shivering?
- Have you eaten?

We are asking the public to help by donating a blanket for someone in need. All donations can be dropped off at any El Paso Fire Station

WINTER TIPS

Seniors - Coping Tips in Inclement Cold Weather

With age, the body may become less able to respond to long exposure to very hot or very cold temperatures. In ***cold weather*** some older people might develop **hypothermia**, a drop in internal body temperature that can be fatal if not detected and treated. This occurs when exposure to cold causes a person's body to lose heat faster than it can be replaced. Hypothermia can be problem for older people, who often have other illnesses or take medications that can

interfere with the body's ability to regulate its temperature.

Older people are especially vulnerable to hypothermia.

Be alert to this risk if you or someone you know:

- **HAS INSUFFICIENT HEAT AT HOME** due to substandard housing conditions, poor insulation, lack of money to pay for fuel, etc.
- **LIVES ALONE** and may be exposed to cold without others noticing.
- **IS PHYSICALLY INACTIVE** due to illness or disability.
- **EATS POORLY** - no hot, balanced meals for good nutrition.
- **TAKES MEDICATION** that reduces the body's ability to protect itself against cold.
- **REACTS ABNORMALLY TO COLD** - for example, does not shiver when cold. (Shivering is the body's way of trying to stay warm.)
- **ACTS LIKE A "DIFFERENT PERSON"** - this could be the result of not being warm enough.

If you know someone who is in a high risk situation, please get them help.

HERE ARE IMPORTANT NUMBERS FOR SERVICES:

RSVP Calling All Seniors	541-4374	American Red Cross	592-0208
Adult Protective Services	521-3882	Area Agency on Aging	533-0998
(24 hour hotline: 1-800-252-5400)		Project Bravo	562-4100
El Paso County General Assistance	532-8850	Salvation Army	544-9811
El Paso ELECTRIC Company	543-5970	El Paso Fire Prevention Division	771-1090
Texas GAS Service	562-2003	Emergencies 9-1-1	
Sun Metro	533-3333		

During this weather it is also important keep your pet safe.

It is also important to help the animals that are left outdoors without essential care from their owners!

PET SAFETY TIPS:

1 - Bring ALL pets into the house when the temperatures drop!

2- Make sure all “outdoor” dogs have a warm, dry doghouse, with a flap-type door and straw to snuggle in.

3 - Never leave your pet without the following

- Shelter (Warm and safe environment where they have refuge from the weather)
- Water (Make sure water is clean and does not freeze)
- Food – (Feed your pet a little more.) *Like people, they burn more calories in the cold to keep warm.*

5 - Keep your pets AWAY from anti-freeze and windshield de-icer. Even a little teaspoonful can kill. Symptoms include: lack of coordination, vomiting, depression and increased water intake and urination. Call your vet immediately if you suspect anti-freeze poisoning: these chemicals kill in a matter of 4-8 hours or less!

6 – If you see an animal left out in the cold with no shelter, notify Animal Control, Animal Cruelty Heartline of El Paso or the Police Department Non-Emergency Number.

Report any Animal Neglect or Cruelty to:

El Paso Police Department

(915) 832-4400

Animal Regulation and Control

(915) 842-1000, 842-1001, 842-1002

Animal Cruelty Heartline of El Paso

(915) 833-1737