

is cool. Follow all of the manufacturer's instructions. Keep all heaters at least three feet away from furniture and other flammable objects.

- **When using fireplaces, stoves, and space heaters, ventilate properly and guard against fire.** Using alternative sources of heat such as these greatly increases your risk for fire and carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.
- **Consider storing sufficient heating fuel.** Regular fuel sources may be cut off. Be cautious of fire hazards when storing any type of fuel.
- **If you have a fireplace, consider keeping a supply of firewood or coal.** Be sure the fireplace is properly vented and in good working order and that you dispose of ashes safely.
- **Install snow fences in rural areas** to reduce drifting snow on roads and paths, which could block access to homes, barns, and animals' feed and water.
- **Create a place where your animals can be comfortable in severe winter weather.** Bring your companion animals indoors. Horses and livestock should have a shelter where they can be protected from wind, snow, ice, and rain. Grazing animals should have access to a protected supply of food and non-frozen water.
- **Be aware of the potential for flooding when snow and ice melt and be sure that your animals have access to high ground that is not impeded by fencing or other barriers.** You may not be able to get to them in time to relocate them in the event of flooding.
- **Ensure that any outbuildings that house or shelter animals can withstand wind and heavy snow and ice.**
- **Consider purchasing flood insurance, if you live in a flood-prone area, to cover possible flood damage that may occur during the spring thaw.** Homeowners' policies do not cover damage from floods. Ask your insurance agent about the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) if you are at risk. More information on NFIP is available at [www.fema.gov/nfip](http://www.fema.gov/nfip).

#### What to Do Before a Winter Storm

##### CORE ACTION MESSAGES

- Stay informed.
- Know the location of public shelters.

#### You should:

- **Keep handy a battery-powered radio or television or NOAA Weather Radio with the Specific Area Message Encoder (SAME) feature.**
- **Contact your local emergency management office or American Red Cross chapter for information on designated public shelters in case you lose power or heat.**
- **Check your Disaster Supplies Kit, and keep it handy.**
- **Be sure you have ample heating fuel.**
- **If you have alternative heating sources, such as fireplaces, wood- or coal-burning stoves, or space heaters, be sure they are installed according to local codes and permit requirements and are clean and in working order.**
- **Check that your fire extinguisher(s) is in good working order, and replace it if necessary. (See Appendix: Fire Extinguishers.)**