



Inland Northwest Chapter  
315 W. Nora Avenue  
Spokane, WA 99205  
[www.SpokaneRedCross.org](http://www.SpokaneRedCross.org)

## News Release NEWS RELEASE

**Contact: Megan Snow**  
509.326.3330 x 218 (office)  
509.990.0969 (cell)  
[snowm@spokaneredcross.org](mailto:snowm@spokaneredcross.org)

### Red Cross Shares Safety Tips as Region Braces for First Big Winter Storm

**[SPOKANE] Washington, December 12, 2008**—As the region braces for its first major snowfall of the season, the American Red Cross urges the community to follow a few simple tips to prepare for this weekend and to stay safe throughout the holiday season.

#### *Staying safe in your home:*

- Create or purchase a 3-day disaster supplies kit. Kits should include water, food, first aid supplies, clothing and bedding, tools and emergency supplies, and special items for medical conditions for each member of your family. Also keep additional blankets, bottled water, and a flashlight with extra batteries available.
- When using alternative heat from a fireplace, wood stove, or space heater, use fire safeguards and ventilate properly.
- If you purchase a fresh Christmas tree, secure it in a sturdy stand away from heat sources and exits and water it daily. If you purchase an artificial tree, make sure it is labeled as fire-retardant.
- Keep candles away from decorations and other combustible materials. Take special care when burning candles and never leave a lit candle unattended.

#### *Staying safe in your car:*

- Have your car winterized and keep a disaster supplies kit in your vehicle. Your kit should include blankets, food, water, flares, chains, gloves and first aid supplies.
- Keep your car's gas tank full for emergency use and to keep the fuel line from freezing.
- Allow extra time when traveling. Let someone know your destination, route, and when you expect to arrive. Monitor weather conditions carefully and adhere to travel advisories.
- If you do get stuck, stay with your car—do not try to walk to safety. Tie a brightly colored cloth (preferably red) to the antenna and keep your overhead light on when the engine is running so you can be seen. Start the car and use the heater for about 10 minutes every hour.

#### *Staying safe outside:*

- If possible, avoid being outside in the coldest part of the day or for extended periods of time in extreme cold weather.
- Dress in multiple thin layers so you can adjust to changing conditions. Most of your body heat is lost through your head so wear a hat, preferably one that covers your ears. Avoid overdressing or overexertion that can lead to heat illness.
- Keep dry and get out of wet clothes immediately. Warm your core body temperature with a blanket or warm fluids like hot cider or soup.

To learn more about how to stay safe during severe winter weather or to purchase a disaster supply kit, contact the American Red Cross-Inland Northwest Chapter at (509) 326-3330 or visit [www.spokaneredcross.org](http://www.spokaneredcross.org).

*The American Red Cross helps people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. Last year, almost a million volunteers and 35,000 employees helped victims of almost 75,000 disasters; taught lifesaving skills to millions; and helped U.S. service members separated from their families stay connected. Almost 4 million people gave blood through the Red Cross, the largest supplier of blood and blood products in the United States. The American Red Cross is part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. An average of 91 cents of every dollar the Red Cross spends is invested in humanitarian services and programs. The Red Cross is not a government agency; it relies on donations of time, money, and blood to do its work.*