

Governor of Virginia

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# GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA

Glenn Youngkin



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## Governor Glenn Youngkin Declares State of Emergency in Advance of Winter Storm

**RICHMOND, VA** – Governor Glenn Youngkin declared a [state of emergency](#) for the coming winter weather that will impact all of the Commonwealth this weekend and into early next week, and he is

urging Virginians, visitors and travelers to take proper precautions.

"I am declaring a state of emergency for the incoming winter storm currently forecasted to impact Virginia starting Sunday, and I'm encouraging all Virginians, visitors, and travelers to stay alert, monitor the weather forecast, and prepare now for any potential impacts," **said Governor Youngkin.** "Given the current projected size of the storm, if your post-holiday travel plans have you leaving Sunday, I encourage you to adjust those plans to leave on Saturday. If you find yourself needing to be on the roadways, please heed any warnings and make sure you are keeping yourselves and others safe. Our pre-treating preparations are underway and substantial state and local resources will continue to actively monitor the forecast and respond through the weekend."

Current weather forecasts project an impactful winter event, including snow and freezing rain, beginning Sunday and continuing into Monday. With projected amounts varying across the state, snow along with freezing rain will be significant enough to impact travel across a broad area. The main impacts will occur Sunday afternoon and evening, into Monday.

Bitterly cold temperatures are also expected next week following the winter event with daytime highs potentially remaining below freezing for a good portion of next week. Gale Watches are in effect for Friday night through Saturday along the coast.

Winds will decrease Sunday and Monday but increase again later on Monday and Tuesday.

### **State Agency Activities**

#### **Virginia Department of Emergency Management**

VDEM remains in contact with local governments and state agency partners to assess potential impacts and be ready to facilitate any requests for assistance. The Logistics Support and Coordination Center stands ready to deploy emergency response assets and supplies as needed to affected areas. The Virginia Emergency Support Team is monitoring the forecast and will be activating the state emergency operations center to coordinate activities related to the storm.

#### **Virginia Department of Transportation**

The safety of the traveling public and of the agency's employees and partners is always top priority for VDOT. Crews are pretreating bridges and roadways in some areas and will be monitoring roadways and treating conditions as they develop. Travelers should pay close attention to forecasts, official announcements and advisories, and should limit travel based on conditions. As holiday travel continues and students return to school, travelers should be aware of roadway conditions along their entire travel route and plan their trips around the winter storm. Prior to travel, motorists should visit [511.vdot.virginia.gov](https://511.vdot.virginia.gov), check the 511 Virginia mobile app or call 511 while in

Virginia for information on road and traffic conditions.

## Virginia State Police

Virginia State Police will be adjusting the number of state troopers and supervisors working the roads Sunday and Monday because of the potential storm impacts. To prevent unnecessary traffic crashes from occurring on Virginia's highways during the storm, state police advises residents to postpone travel plans and avoid driving until weather conditions improve.

If having to travel during the storm, drivers are reminded to do the following:

- **Use headlights.** Increasing your visibility helps you to avoid slick and dangerous spots on the road, as well as helps other drivers see you better.
- **Slow your speed.** Though state police works closely with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to identify problem areas on Virginia's highways during a winter storm, drivers still must drive for conditions. Slowing your speed gives you more time to safely react and avoid a crash. Drive your vehicle based on your ability to properly maintain control of your vehicle.
- **Don't tailgate.** You need increased stopping distance on slick road surfaces. Give yourself more space between vehicles traveling ahead of you to avoid rear-end collisions.
- **Buckle up.** Most crashes that occur during winter weather are caused by vehicles sliding

into guardrails, off the road or other vehicles.

Wearing your seat belt protects you from being thrown around the inside of your vehicle and suffering serious injury in a crash.

- **Check your vehicle.** Make sure your vehicle is in good working order for the conditions. Fill up the tank in advance. Check windshield wipers, windshield wiper fluid, tire tread, battery life, etc.
- **Don't leave home** without a window scraper, blanket, bottled water, snack, cell phone charger and flashlight.

## **Virginia National Guard**

The Virginia National Guard is in close contact with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management about possible response operations with the potential of severe winter weather. During domestic operations, if it is determined the VNG can best provide the requested assistance, VDEM tasks the mission. The VNG responds as part of a multi-agency team with other state and local agencies to provide support capabilities requests submitted through the VEST by Virginia localities.

## **Personal Preparedness Actions**

- During a winter storm, stay off the roads as much as possible and only drive when absolutely necessary. Always give snowplows and responders the right of way.
- Never use a generator, grill, camp stove or gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal burning device inside your home, garage,

basement, crawlspace or any other partially enclosed area.

- Snow shoveling is a known trigger for heart attacks. Always avoid overexertion when shoveling.
- When severe weather occurs, plan to check on elderly or disabled neighbors and relatives.
- If you must travel, know road conditions before you leave home.
- Visit [511.vdot.virginia.gov](https://511.vdot.virginia.gov), check the 511 Virginia mobile app, or call 511 while in Virginia for information on road and traffic conditions.
- Protect yourself from frostbite. Hands, feet and face are the most commonly affected areas so wear a hat, mittens (which are warmer than gloves) and cover your mouth with a scarf to reduce heat loss.
- Keep dry. Change out of wet clothing frequently to prevent a loss of body heat.
- Wear several layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing rather than one layer or heavy clothing.
- Prepare your home
  - Make sure your home is properly insulated
  - Check the weather stripping around your windows and doors
  - Learn how to shut off water valves in case a pipe bursts
  - Have additional heat sources on hand in case of a power outage
  - Keep a fire extinguisher accessible
  - Replace the batteries in your carbon monoxide detector annually
- Prepare your car
  - Batteries lose power as temperatures drop, be sure to have yours tested

- Check your car's antifreeze level
- Have your radiator system serviced
- Replace your car's windshield wiper fluid with a wintertime mix
- Proactively replace your car's worn tires and wiper blades
- To help with visibility, clean off your car entirely – including your trunk, roof, windows and headlights
- Please heed warnings to avoid travel. If you absolutely have to be on the roadway, prepare your vehicle and have a kit for you and your passengers. This could include items such as:
  - Blankets
  - Drinking water and snacks for everyone in the car, including pets
  - Boots
  - Basic first-aid kit
  - Warm coat and insulating layers (sweatpants, gloves, hat, socks)
  - Rags, paper towels or pre-moistened wipes
  - Basic set of tools
  - Car emergency warning devices such as road flares or reflectors
  - Ice scraper/snow brush
  - Jumper cables/jump pack
  - Fire extinguisher
  - Cash
  - Items for children such as diapers, baby wipes, toys, etc.
  - Flashlight, with extra batteries
  - Hand warmers
  - Paper map
  - Portable smartphone power bank
  - Extra medication
  - Garbage bags

- Traction aid such as sand, salt or non-clumping cat litter
- Tarp, raincoat and gloves
- Shovel

To learn more about how to prepare yourself, your family, and your business for winter weather, visit [www.vaemergency.gov/winter-weather](http://www.vaemergency.gov/winter-weather). For real-time traffic conditions anywhere in the state, dial 5-1-1 or visit [511.vdot.virginia.gov](http://511.vdot.virginia.gov).

## Power Outages

- To report an outage, please contact your service provider
- Check with your provider directly to determine repair schedules
- For more information and tips on what actions to take during a power outage, please visit: <https://www.ready.gov/power-outages>

## Emergency Alerts

These days, emergency alerts can reach you in so many ways—WEA (Wireless Emergency Alerts) come to your cell phone, EAS (Emergency Alert System) on TV and Radio, NOAA weather radio alerts, mobile apps and more. It's important to have several different ways you can receive emergency alerts, and to be armed with the knowledge you need before an emergency happens.

- Know the current forecast and get alerted for any watches, warnings, or advisories on



the [National Weather Service's website](#)

- [Download FEMA app](#) and local news apps for severe weather alerts
- Sign up to receive alerts on your phone, tune in to your local weather station, or listen to your NOAA Weather Radio

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[Return to top](#)



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