

Your Health Matters

COLD WEATHER HEALTH AND SAFETY TIPS

We've had such a long, warm fall, that the colder temperatures this last week or so came as a huge surprise. With the arrival of winter weather, The Montgomery County Health Department recommends the following tips to help keep you and your family safe and warm during cold weather.

Warm House at a Cool Cost

When temperatures are consistently near or below freezing, your furnace or other heat sources must work overtime to keep your home warm. You can help reduce heating costs this winter by weatherizing your home with some simple, low-cost steps.

Protect Your Home from Ice and Frozen Pipes

Clean out gutters so water can flow freely through them and out downspouts. Insulate water pipes in all uninsulated spaces by covering them with electrical heating tape and foam insulation.

Winterize Air Conditioners

Remove window air conditioners or cover them with a breathable waterproof cover. Clean the dirt and debris from your air conditioner condensing unit with a high pressure wash, and then cover it with a breathable waterproof cover.

Service Heat Sources

Have your heating unit serviced by a qualified professional and be sure the filter is changed. If you use a fireplace, have a professional conduct a thorough inspection of the chimney. Only use fireplaces, wood stoves, or other heating systems that are properly vented to the outside.

Keep Warm Air Inside Your Home

Caulk around gaps in siding, windows, or doors and install weather-stripping. Cover windows with insulation film or plastic. Place draft guards or a rolled up towel around the bottom of exterior doors. Place fiberglass insulation around basement doors, windows in unused rooms, and your attic floor. Switch your ceiling fans to rotate clockwise so they push hot air along the ceiling towards the floor. Lower your thermostat while you are out of the house. According to the US Department of Energy, each degree you lower the heat saves 1% on your utility bill.

The Montgomery County Health Department loves taking care of your family, and works every day to protect, promote and improve health in our community. To learn more, call 573-564-2495 or visit us online at www.montgomerycountyhealth.org or on Facebook or Twitter @healthymoco. ■

Linda Harman

11.22.16