

EMERGENCY Management

Helping You To Help Yourselves
Newsletter of the Emergency Planning Service

December 2010

Snow Code

Clearing snow and ice from pavements yourself

Directgov

Public services all in one place

Already this year we have seen extremely cold weather and widespread snow in Devon and across the rest of the UK.

This guide is designed to help you to act in a neighbourly way by safely clearing snow and ice from pavements and public spaces.

Will I be held liable if someone falls on a path I have cleared?

There is no law preventing you from clearing snow and ice on the pavement outside your property, pathways to your property or public spaces.

It is very unlikely that you would face any legal liability, as long as you are careful, and use common sense to ensure that you do not make the pavement or pathway clearly more dangerous than before. People using areas affected by snow and ice also have responsibility to be careful themselves.

What can I do to help clear snow and ice from pavements and public spaces?

Practical advice from highway engineers is given below. This is not a comprehensive list.

- Start early: it is much easier to remove fresh, loose snow compared to compacted ice that has been compressed by people walking on it.
- **Do not use hot water.** This will melt the snow, but may replace it with black ice, increasing the risk of injury.
- Be a good neighbour: some people may be unable to clear snow and ice on paths leading to their property or indeed the footway fronting their property. Snowfall and cold weather

pose particular difficulties for them gaining access to and from their property or walking to the shops.

- If shovelling snow, consider where you are going to put it, so that it does not block people's paths, or block drainage channels. This could shift the problem elsewhere.
- Make a pathway down the middle of the area to be cleared first, so you have a clear surface to walk on. Then you can shovel the snow from the centre to the sides.
- Spreading some salt on the area you have cleared will help to prevent any ice forming. Table salt or dishwasher salt will work, but avoid spreading on plants or grass as they may be damaged by it. A few grams (a tablespoon) for each square metre you clear should work. The salt found in salting bins will be needed for keeping roads clear.

Particular care and attention should be given to steps and steep gradients to ensure snow and ice is removed. You might need to apply additional salt to these areas.

- Use the sun to your advantage. Removing the top layer of snow will allow the sun to melt any ice beneath; however you will need to cover any ice with salt to stop it refreezing overnight.
- If there is no salt available, then a little sand or ash is a reasonable substitute. It will not have the same de-icing properties as salt but should offer grip under foot.

Why is the Government publishing this information?

During the severe winter in 2009/10, many people across the country worked very hard to keep our transport network open. This included many members of the public who cleared pavements and public spaces around their homes. Some people, however,



were deterred from taking action to clear pavements and other public spaces because they feared that they might be sued.

An independent review of the transport sector's response to the severe weather of 2009/10 recommended that the Department for Transport should publish this note on good practice for members of the public in clearing snow and ice from footways and other public spaces.

The Government is committed, as a key part of the Big Society agenda, to remove the barriers which may unnecessarily prevent people from helping themselves and those around them.

More information is available at:

[www.direct.gov.uk/
preparingforemergencies](http://www.direct.gov.uk/preparingforemergencies)



Focus on the Voluntary Sector . . .

Voluntary agencies play a crucial role in the response to an emergency in the UK, supporting the responding agencies and those affected. In each of the next few editions we will focus on one of the many voluntary agencies that assist during a crisis and how they provide support. This quarter we will look at the Salvation Army.



The Salvation Army
United Kingdom with the Republic of Ireland

What does the Salvation Army do in an Emergency?

The Salvation Army is one of the largest, most diverse providers of social services in the UK after the Government. Founded in East London in 1865, they are now working in 120 countries worldwide.

As a church and registered charity, The Salvation Army also supports the work of the emergency services by providing refreshments, shelter and counselling at major incidents.

Services that The Salvation Army Emergency Response Teams may provide

- Full co-operation with Police, Fire and Rescue, Ambulance Service and Local Authority personnel in establishing an information, support and advice centre.
- The provision of refreshments from a purpose built response unit and community vehicles adapted for this purpose. These vehicles can provide

refreshments to the statutory and voluntary personnel involved in the incident.

- The provision of food, clothing, bedding and furniture as available.
- Mortuary assistance in instances where relatives may be required to identify bodies or possessions of the deceased.
- If required, The Salvation Army will set up and co-ordinate Rest Centres. The Salvation Army has Corps halls and Social Service Centres throughout the United Kingdom Territory and therefore, suitable accommodation can be made available, if required by the Local Authority.
- Salvation Army personnel will provide a spiritual ministry to people where required and will minister to all involved in the incident, either at the scene or in their homes. The

assistance of clergy and ministers of other faiths may also be requested.

- Liaising with, and offering assistance to Hospital Chaplains as required.
- Establish ongoing communications and full co-operative with the Police, Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance Service, Local Authority Emergency Planning Team and Social Services Department



Be Prepared

Prepare an Emergency Pack at Home

A wind-up or battery powered radio (*with frequencies marked*)

- A wind-up or battery torch
- Spare batteries
- First aid kit
- A copy of home emergency plan and contact list
- Bottled water/canned drinks

Make an evacuation checklist of items to pack quickly if you are suddenly advised to leave your home

- Your emergency pack
- Home and car keys
- Warm clothing
- Toiletries, sanitary supplies, essential medication and personal items eg glasses
- Baby food, nappies
- Wallet, purse and bank cards
- Mobile phone and charger
- Pet carrier, collar and lead



Keep an emergency pack in the car

- Bottled water
- First aid kit
- Torch and batteries
- Cigarette plug lead charger for mobile phone
- Sweets.
- Long life snacks
- Blanket, warm clothing and wool hat
- Waterproof coat
- Wellington boots
- Spare socks
- Gloves

Winter motoring

IN THE CAR

So what can you do to make driving in winter conditions safer this year? Firstly prepare; make sure your car has anti freeze in it and that your tyre pressures are correct.

When the weather starts to get colder make sure you check weather forecasts and allow more time for journeys. If your car is kept outside make sure you allow time to clear the windows properly.

Listen to the noise your car makes on the road if you are driving on ice the tyre noise will almost disappear completely. Watch the cars in front are they sliding on any particular parts of the road.

If you do hit ice and feel the car start to slide immediately take your foot off the accelerator, don't be tempted to brake (this will increase your risk of spinning) and steer gently into the slide. The best way to avoid sliding in the first place is to make sure your speed is right, it may need to be slower than you think, at just 30mph you are travelling 30ft every second! To reduce the risk further make sure you are very smooth when you accelerate, brake or turn.

Follow this winter checklist for drivers:

- Check wiper blades for cracks and defects and replace if necessary. Salt takes its toll on wipers.
- Top up the washer level with the correct fluid for winter temperatures to ensure it does not freeze up in a coldsnap.
- Check tyre condition, tread and pressures. The wrong tyre pressures can induce skids and sliding. Check the spare.
- Check all lights and mirrors. Replace if faulty.
- Check oil levels and anti-freeze.
- Listen and take heed of weather warnings.



- If the weather is atrocious, don't travel, make other arrangements.
- Before every journey when the roads are salted, wipe over all the vehicle lights so you can be seen. Wipe the windows and give yourself a clearer view.
- Pouring hot water over the windscreen risks cracking it and as it cools rapidly will probably quickly freeze over. Use a proper de-icer or ice scraper.
- Water poured over locks causes them to freeze solid, causing further problems.
- Before a cold spell spray the barrel with a light penetrating oil to prevent them freezing for quite some time.
- Do not move off until you can see through all the windows. Allow extra time to prepare your vehicle in a morning. Use your car heater demister blower.
- Do not leave your car unattended while thawing with the engine running, even if your vehicle is on the drive or the road outside. Also, don't leave the keys in the ignition while on the petrol forecourt.
- Allow more space between you and the vehicle in front.

IF YOU BECOME TRAPPED IN YOUR CAR

Stay in the car.

Do not leave the car to search for assistance unless help is visible within 100 yards. You may become disoriented and lost in blowing and drifting snow.

Display a trouble sign.

Hang a brightly coloured cloth on the radio antenna and raise the bonnet.

Occasionally run the engine to keep warm.

Turn on the car's engine for about 10 minutes each hour. Run the heater when the car is running. Also, turn on the car's light when the car is running. Beware of carbon monoxide poisoning. Keep the exhaust pipe clear of snow, and open a downwind window slightly for ventilation.

Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.

Winter Car Kit

Before starting your journey make sure you have these items in your car.

Follow this checklist:

- Mobile phone
- Torch with extra batteries
- First aid kit with pocket knife
- Necessary medications
- Blanket
- A coat, hat, scarf and gloves
- Small shovel
- Small toolkit (pliers, wrench, screwdriver)
- Jump leads
- Brightly coloured cloth to use as a flag
- Food (chocolate bar) and water

For more information visit www.devon.gov.uk/winter



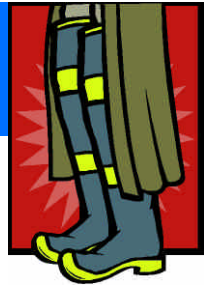
Do minor exercises to keep up circulation.

Clap hands and move arms and legs occasionally. Try not to stay in one position for too long. If more than one person is in the car, take turns sleeping.

For warmth, huddle together.

Use newspapers, maps, and even the removable car mats for added insulation.





As many of you will already be aware there is a national flood exercise taking place 4 - 11 March 2011 and that the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Resilience Forum will be exercising on Mon 7 March.

There are now resources available on the website for communities, businesses, schools and care homes etc to start planning their response and engage in the exercise and to validate flood plans. You will need to register on the website to access your pack.

During the exercise week, thousands of professionals across the country will be taking part making sure they are ready to manage all types of flooding. In addition to these professionals, there is the opportunity for communities, businesses, schools and care homes to make sure they can better protect themselves and their properties if a flood comes their way.

With this in mind, a community pack has been produced to help you find the information you need to start planning your response or if you have already put a flood plan in place, to test it. In this pack, you will find:

- **Background information** on Exercise Watermark and flooding in general.
- **Information on getting more prepared** for both individuals and community groups. There are also a number of other ideas on how you or your community can take part.
- **A step by step exercise** including a presentation (fluvial or coastal scenario), speakers notes and information on what to do around getting started. This section of the pack will help communities test their flood plan if they already have one in place.
- A number of **templates** that you might find useful when planning or holding your event



More information is available on the website:




www.exercisewatermark.co.uk

First Point of Contact

Did you know your City, District or Borough Emergency Planning Officer is your first point of contact for assistance?

You will find them listed below for reference. Remember they are all there to help you!

Also, the Devon County Council website has lots of useful information for both individuals and communities:

-  www.devon.gov.uk
-  Safety and Emergencies
-  Emergencies

Goodbye to Jane Tancock

After many years Emergency Planning service in Devon, we say goodbye to Jane Tancock at the end of January.

Jane started her emergency planning career with Devon County Council in the days where the term was 'Civil Defence' before moving to East Devon District Council.

We wish her the very best in her retirement.









Jane's role will be shared between Pam Harvey (South Somerset District Council) and technical officers at East Devon.

Exeter City

Following the retirement of Peter Brown earlier this year, the emergency planning role will be filled by County Council Emergency Planning Officer, Judith Hardiman, until March 2011.

Jude brings a wealth of experience and will be working closely in a liaison role with service managers at Exeter City Council over the next few months until March 11 to ensure continuity of Emergency Planning work.

Jude's contact details are below.

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