

Make time for winter



Essential information to keep you
safe and warm this winter



EAST RIDING
OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL



Introduction

Winter weather can be unpredictable and occasionally can cause disruption to residents. This booklet provides some helpful advice on things you can do to minimise inconvenience and stay safe and warm by preparing a winter plan in advance of bad weather; use the checklist on page four to help you.

On page 18 you can make a note of a friend or neighbours telephone number who may either be able to help you clear snow or who you can contact to help pick up essential items. This booklet also includes tips to allow you to get out and about during bad weather and how to safely clear snow from footpaths, there is also a map on pages seven and eight showing which roads are treated in bad weather.

Please remember the best advice we can give when the weather is really bad is do not travel unless you really have to.



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Head of streetscene services

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Make time for winter

Help yourself to stay safe and warm this winter by preparing a winter plan in advance of any bad weather.

Exchange telephone numbers with your close neighbours in case you need them in an emergency. They may be able to help with shopping, if you are worried about going out when it is icy or just to provide a friendly voice when it is cold and miserable.

Arrange for a pre-winter maintenance check on your home, make sure gutters are clear and your heating is in good working order. Remember, before you let any engineers into your home check that they are appropriately registered.

In an emergency you might need to turn off the gas, electricity or water supply to your home. Find out how to do it now, if you don't already know, in case you need to do it in a hurry:

- **To turn off your gas supply you need to locate the gas isolation valve. In newer houses, the gas meter and isolation valve are often outside in a meter box. If not, try looking under the stairs, beneath the kitchen sink or in the garage. Move the handle a quarter turn. And remember, if you smell gas, open doors and windows and never operate any electrical switches.**
- **To turn off your electricity, you will need to find the electricity isolation switch. It may be under the stairs, in a hallway, porch or garage. You will normally find it next to your main fusebox or trip switches.**
- **To turn off your water you need to find your internal stop tap (IST). This is usually found in the kitchen or downstairs in the cloakroom or bathroom, often under a sink, but can be anywhere on the ground floor of your property. As a rule it is only a few inches/centimetres from floor level and is situated on a pipe that comes through the floor. One way of locating the IST is to look under your kitchen sink and follow the pipe that connects to the cold tap away from the sink. This should lead you to the main pipe supplying the cold water into your home and you should find an IST on the pipe close to where it enters the property. If you live in a flat the IST can be in ducting inside your flat or behind an access shaft in the communal area.**

Create a winter plan

When thinking about your winter plan you should use this checklist and tick items off as you go through it.

- Buy some salt for footpaths and steps. You can use dishwasher salt too.
- Check the weather forecast and ensure you have enough essential medicines. Some pharmacies offer a collection and delivery service, telephone your local pharmacy for more information if you are unable to leave the house.
- Arrange your flu jab – check with your GP to see if you can get it free.
- Exchange telephone numbers with neighbours who could help with clearing snow or picking up items from the shops. *Make a note of these on page 18.*
- Test your smoke detector by pressing the test button and make sure the alarm sounds. For more fire safety advice and to see if you are eligible for a free home safety visit call Humberside Fire and Rescue Service on 0300 3038242.
- Check your torch is working in case of a power cut – a wind up torch is useful as it does not need batteries.
- Get your heating system serviced by an appropriately registered engineer.
- For those not connected to the mains gas network, ensure heating oil and gas are purchased early to avoid running out.

Getting out and about during winter

If possible stay indoors during bad weather. A friend or neighbour may be able to visit the shops or pharmacy for you but if you need to go outside make sure you take precautions.

Wearing several layers of clothing made of wool, cotton or fleecy synthetic fibres will keep you warmer than one thick one as heat will get trapped between the layers. If going outside put on a coat, scarf, gloves and warm shoes or boots with non slip soles as this will help if it is icy outside. Always remember to wear a hat as up to half of your body heat is lost through your head.

Clearing snow and ice

Anyone can clear snow and ice from the pavement outside their home or public spaces to prevent slips and falls.

Follow the snow code to clear snow and ice safely.

Don't be put off clearing paths because you're afraid of legal action. Remember, people walking on snow and ice have a responsibility to be careful themselves.

Follow the advice below to make sure you clear the pathway safely and effectively.

- **Clear the snow and ice early in the day.**
- **It's easier to move fresh, loose snow rather than hard snow that has packed together from people walking on it. So if possible, start removing the snow and ice in the morning.**
- **If you remove the top layer of snow in the morning, any sunshine during the day will help melt the ice beneath. You can then cover the path with salt before it freezes again.**
- **Pay extra attention to clearing snow and ice from steps and steep pathways - you might need to use more salt on these areas.**
- **Use salt or sand - not water. Don't make the pathways more dangerous by causing them to refreeze. If you use water to melt the snow, it may refreeze and turn to black ice. Black ice increases the risk of injuries as it is invisible and very slippery.**
- **You can melt snow or prevent black ice by spreading some salt on the area you have cleared. You can use ordinary table or dishwasher salt - a tablespoon for each square metre you clear should work.**

- **Be careful not to spread salt on plants or grass as it may damage them.**
- **If you don't have enough salt you can also use sand or ash. These won't stop the path icing over as effectively as salt, but will provide good grip underfoot.**
- **When you're shovelling snow, take care where you put it so it doesn't block people's paths or drains. Make sure you make a path down the middle of the area to be cleared first, so you have a clear surface to walk on. Then shovel the snow from the centre of the path to the sides.**
- **Offer to clear your neighbours' paths. If your neighbour has difficulty getting in and out of their home, offer to clear snow and ice around their property as well. Check that any elderly or disabled neighbours are alright in the cold weather. If you're worried about them, try contacting their relatives or friends, or if necessary the council's Customer Service Network on (01482) 393939.**



East Riding road salting map

Keep to our salted networks as much as you can. This may involve a slight detour but will be safer and probably quicker than risking icy back roads.



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What the council will do to treat the roads

We do our best to ensure that, as far as possible, you can travel around the East Riding with the minimum of delays and disruption caused by severe winter weather.

We treat the precautionary network which covers around 38 per cent of all our roads, about 800 miles, which is a greater proportion than many other authorities.

In the worst weather, we cannot guarantee that every road will be kept open at all times as we do not have the resources to make this possible in an area as large as the East Riding.

The weather is unpredictable by nature and we must concentrate our efforts on a defined network of main roads. In extreme conditions private contractors, such as farmers will deal with local problems.

In addition we provide salt bins and heaps for the public to use on roads and footpaths.

Driving in poor weather conditions

Where possible it is best not to drive in poor weather conditions. However, some people have no choice and need to drive in bad weather; if this is the case the following tips will help you to arrive safely.

Driving on ice and slush:

- **Drive slowly using the highest gear possible to avoid wheel spin.**
- **Manoeuvre gently, avoid sudden braking or acceleration.**
- **When slowing down, get into a low gear as early as possible and allow your speed to reduce using the brake pedal gently.**
- **Leave plenty of room between you and the vehicle in front. Remember, in these conditions it can take 10 times longer to stop than on a dry road.**

In difficult conditions:

- **Do not drive unless you absolutely need to.**
- **Check weather forecasts and travel information.**
- **If possible, tell someone when you expect to arrive.**
- **Make sure you are equipped with warm clothing, food, a torch, a shovel, water, boots, a hazard warning triangle and a fully charged hands free mobile phone.**

If you get stuck in snow:

- **Switch on your hazard warning lights.**
- **Move the car slowly backwards and forwards out of the rut using the highest gear you can.**
- **Do not leave the vehicle unless you are in sight of a suitable destination. Let help come to you.**
- **Do not keep your engine running for warmth; there is a risk of carbon monoxide poisoning from the exhaust fumes.**
- **Put on warm clothing to avoid losing body heat.**
- **If you must abandon your vehicle, try to leave it out of the path of snowploughs. Advise the police or the council where it is and how to contact you.**

Driving in fog:

- Drive slowly using dipped headlights or fog lights.
- Do not drive too closely to the vehicle in front.
- Do not speed up if the fog suddenly lifts, it drifts rapidly and is often patchy.

Driving on flooded roads

- Stay in first gear and drive slowly.
- Slip the clutch to keep the engine speed higher than normal avoiding a stall.
- Where possible drive towards the middle of the road to avoid the deeper water at the edges.

Driving in winter sun

- Dazzle from the winter sun is an underestimated hazard. Carry sunglasses to help reduce the glare.



At home during winter

Staying warm during severe cold

During the winter months people die as a result of being too cold in their own home. The greatest risk is not usually from hypothermia as many people think but the health of people with a cold related illness for example heart disease, stroke and breathing problems are often at a greater risk when their homes are cold.

Those groups particularly susceptible to the effects of very cold weather are the following:

- **Older people.**
- **People with pre-existing long-term health conditions such as heart or respiratory illness.**
- **Those suffering from limited mobility or at risk of falls.**
- **People with severe mental illness or dementia.**
- **Very young people.**
- **Those living in deprived circumstances or suffering from fuel poverty.**

Insurance

Being prepared starts with making sure you have adequate insurance, you could take out insurance for your belongings in case anything happens to them – this is normally referred to as contents insurance. If you own your house you will also need buildings insurance, this is usually a requirement of a mortgage. If you rent then enquire about tenants' insurance.

If you do not understand the cover that you have, talk to your insurer. Insurance brokers can also help to find quotes for you. Telephone numbers for insurance companies and insurance brokers can be found in the yellow pages.

- **Make sure you keep your insurance documents in a safe place so you can find them easily if you have an emergency.**
- **Take photographs of anything valuable and keep receipts.**

In case of an emergency (ICE)

An easy way for the emergency services to quickly find the contact details of your next of kin is to place a card next to your telephone or a sticker on the handset with 'ICE' and the name and number of who to call in an emergency. Another card in your purse or wallet is a good idea in case you have an accident whilst you are out and about. If you have a mobile phone you could also save their number as 'ICE'.

Keeping warm at home

Cold homes have a significant impact on people's health. One of the best ways of keeping well during winter is to stay warm. To keep warm at home during the day try to:

- **Heat your main living room to around 18-21°C (64-70°F) and the rest of the house at least 16°C (61°F).**
- **Heat all the rooms you use in the day. Make sure you keep your living room warm throughout the day and heat your bedroom before going to bed.**
- **Set the timer on your heating to come on before you get up and switch off when you go to bed.**
- **In very cold weather set the heating to come on earlier, rather than turn the thermostat up, so you won't be cold while you wait for your home to heat up.**
- **Keep curtains drawn and doors closed to block out draughts.**
- **Make sure that your radiators are not obstructed by curtains or furniture.**
- **Have regular hot drinks and at least one hot meal a day if possible. Eating regularly helps keep energy levels up during winter.**
- **Wear warm clothing, plenty of thin layers are better rather than one thick one.**
- **Keep as active as possible.**
- **Wrap up warm if you need to go outside on cold days, wear a coat, hat, scarf, gloves and warm shoes or boots.**



To keep warm at home during the night you should:

- Try to keep the temperature above 18°C (65°F) in your bedroom overnight.
- If you use a fire or heater in your bedroom during winter open the window or door a little at night for ventilation.
- Use an electric blanket or a hot water bottle but never use them together as you could electrocute yourself.
- Check what type of electric blanket you have – some are designed only to warm the bed before you get in and should not to be used throughout the night.
- Wear bed socks and thermal underwear at night.

Financial help for heating your home

You may be able to claim financial help with heating your home, including:

- **Winter Fuel Payment.**
- **Cold Weather Payment.**
- **Warm Home Discount scheme.**
- **Warm Front scheme.**

To find out if you are eligible for financial assistance contact East Riding of Yorkshire Council's money and benefit advice service on **Freephone 0800 9150381** or visit www.gov.uk

Heating and insulation grants

The Warm Front Scheme provides grants of up to **£3,500** for heating and insulation measures in owner occupier and privately rented low income and other vulnerable households and up to **£6,000** if oil heating is needed. To find out if you qualify, call a **Warm Front** advisor free on **0800 316 2805** (lines are open Monday to Friday 8am-6pm and Saturdays 9am-5pm) or visit www.warmfront.co.uk

A range of energy efficiency works may be available depending on your personal circumstances.

Cavity and loft insulation grants

If you are over 70 OR receiving an income or disability related benefit and own your own home or privately rent it, you may qualify to have your home insulated at no cost. If you are not receiving an income or disability related benefit, as long as the property is owned or privately rented then you may be eligible to reduced cost insulation, subject to a survey of your home.

For more information about the scheme please telephone the council's energy efficiency team on **(01482) 396301** or email energy.efficiency@eastriding.gov.uk

Vegetable soup recipe

If you have any leftover vegetables don't throw them away, you can use them to make a delicious vegetable soup. This soup is quick and easy to make and will keep you warm on cold winter days.

You will need

1 large onion, peeled and finely chopped

2 garlic cloves, minced

2 large carrots, peeled and chopped into bite-sized chunks

2 celery stalks, washed and chopped into bite-sized chunks

4 tbsp vegetable oil

3 cups/300g assorted vegetables, peeled and chopped into bite sized chunks*

20 fl oz/600ml vegetable, chicken or beef stock

1 bay leaf

Salt and pepper

*Whatever vegetables you have available will do however some that are great for soups include: parsnips, celeriac, leeks, sweet potato, broccoli, cauliflower or any other winter roots, you could even add any leftover herbs.

Method

1. In a large stock pot or soup pan heat the vegetable oil, add the onion and gently cook until the onions begin to soften. Add the celery and carrot cooking for another 5 minutes taking care not to burn the garlic.
2. Add the chopped vegetables and stir, adding in the stock and bay leaf, cook until all the vegetables are soft and cooked through (approx 20 minutes).
3. Blend the soup in the pan using a stick blender or pour into a food processor and blend.
4. Cook the soup for a further 5 minutes to reduce slightly, season with salt and pepper to taste and serve.



Stay healthy in winter

There are things you can do that will reduce the risk of illness and protect you against the cold.

What is influenza (flu)?

Seasonal flu normally occurs during the winter months. It is a much more serious illness than a cold and it usually results in having to go to bed for several days, feeling very poorly with a high temperature and aching limbs.

Older people and people with chronic medical conditions (such as asthma) are most at risk of developing complications if they catch flu. This is why the seasonal flu vaccination is recommended to these groups of people each year:

Get an annual flu jab

You can get a free jab if you:

- **Have serious heart, lung or kidney disease or diabetes.**
- **Have a weak immune system, caused by disease or medical treatment.**
- **Have had a stroke or TIA (transient ischaemic attack).**
- **Are aged 65 years or over.**
- **Are pregnant.**

Contact your GP or talk to your pharmacist if you think you might qualify for a free flu jab.

What you can do to protect yourself and others from flu:

- **Use a tissue to cover your nose and mouth when coughing and/or sneezing.**
- **Dispose of the tissue promptly, by bagging and binning it, and then wash your hands.**
- **Clean hands frequently with soap and water, especially after coughing, sneezing and using tissues. An alcohol hand rub could be used as an alternative for cleaning hands, if water is not available.**
- **Avoid touching your mouth, eyes and nose, unless you have recently cleaned your hands.**
- **Use normal household detergent and water to clean surfaces frequently touched by hands.**

- **Wash your hands when arriving back from outside activities, before and after direct contact with contaminated surfaces, after contact with bodily fluids, before handling food and before eating or smoking.**

Make sure all members of your family follow this advice.

The latest advice is available from www.nhs.uk or by calling NHS Direct on **0845 4647**.

Eat well and stay active

Eating regular meals will help keep your energy levels up during winter. Try to:

- **Have plenty of hot food and drinks.**
- **Plan your meals and keep your diet as varied as possible.**
- **Aim to include your daily five portions of fruit and vegetables; this includes tinned and frozen fruit and vegetables.**
- **Stay active.**

Exercise is good for your overall health and it can keep you warm in winter. Even a small amount of exercise can bring health benefits. If possible, try to move around at least once an hour.

Recognise the signs of hypothermia

Hypothermia is caused by getting too cold. Older people, babies and people with certain health conditions are among those more at risk.

Shivering can be used as a guide to how severe hypothermia is. If a person can stop shivering on their own, the hypothermia is mild. If they can't stop shivering, it's moderate to severe. Severe hypothermia needs urgent medical treatment in hospital.





Stay up to date

In the event of severe weather up-to-date weather and road information will be broadcast on local radio.

BBC Radio Humberside 95.9 FM / 1485 AM / DAB www.bbc.co.uk/humber

BBC Radio York 95.5 FM

96.9 Viking FM 96.9 FM

Magic 1161 MW

Capital FM 105.8 FM

Yorkshire Coast Radio 96.2 or 102.4 FM (Bridlington)

103.1 FM (Scarborough) KCFM 99.8 FM



You can also receive up to the minute travel information for the East Riding visit www.twitter.co.uk and follow **@ER_roads** on Twitter

Visit www.eastriding.gov.uk for more information.

Useful contacts

<p>Age UK www.ageuk.org.uk 0800 169 6565</p>	<p>Department of Health www.doh.gov.uk</p>	
<p>Electricity (24 hour emergency service and supply failures only) 0845 733 1331</p>	<p>Gas (24 hour emergency service and gas escapes) 0800 111 999</p>	
<p>Environment Agency www.environment-agency.gov.uk 0800 807060 (Incident hotline) 0845 988 1188 (Floodline)</p>	<p>East Riding of Yorkshire Council www.eastriding.gov.uk (01482) 393939</p>	
<p>Humberside Fire and Rescue (non emergency) www.humbersidefire.gov.uk (01482) 565333</p>	<p>Yorkshire Water (24 hour emergency service) 0845 124 24 24</p>	
<p>NHS Direct (24 hour confidential health advice and information) www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk 0845 4647</p>	<p>Police (non emergency) www.humberside.police.uk 101</p>	
<p>Public Services www.direct.gov.uk</p>	<p>Met Office www.metoffice.gov.uk</p>	
<p>Doctor</p> <input type="text"/>	<p>Pharmacy</p> <input type="text"/>	<p>Neighbour / friend</p> <input type="text"/>

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