

Cold Weather Plan for England 2012

Keeping well and healthy when it is really cold



Easy Read version of:
Cold Weather Plan for England 2012:
Protecting health and reducing harm from severe cold.

What is in this booklet



About the Cold Weather Plan for England

page

1



Cold Weather Warnings

4



Telling people about bad weather

7



Top tips for staying well and healthy

11



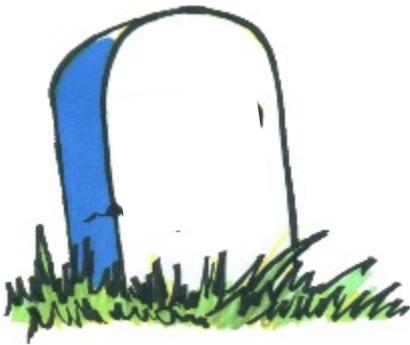
More detail about the levels

13



About the Cold Weather Plan for England

The Department of Health wrote the plan.



We are trying to make sure not so many people die because of the cold.

Last year nearly 24,000 more people died over the winter period than other parts of the year. This was about the same as the year before.



People said they liked last year's plan and it helped them think about the dangers from cold weather and what they could do to help.



We have now changed some things from last year to make the plan better and try to stop so many people dying and getting sick.



To help, £20 million will be given out to local councils this winter to help them keep people well in cold weather and warm at home



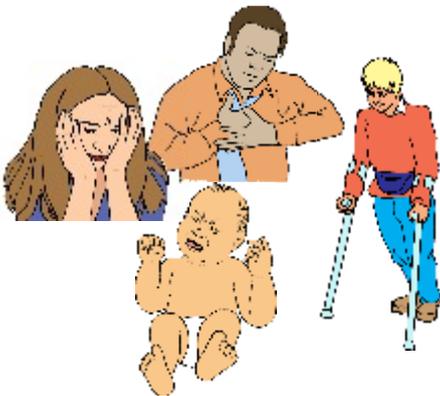
The plan is for everyone, councils, services and communities.



It says how to get ready for winter and stay well and healthy when it is really cold.



Cold weather can also make it harder to run services that support people to stay healthy.



The plan is for:

- NHS, local councils and other public services
- services that support people to stay safe
- people who want to help in their community and look after each other
- people at risk.

Please tell us if you think of anything that can help make the Cold Weather plan even better.

Call Phillip Gardiner: **020 7210 5352**

Cold Weather Warnings



The Cold Weather Plan has 5 different **levels** of things to do depending on how bad the **Met Office** thinks the weather will be.



Met Office

The Met Office gives warnings about **severe weather**.



Severe weather means really bad weather, **very cold** with lots of **ice** or **heavy snow** (or all these things together).



Level 0 – Getting Ready for Winter

This is to help people get ready for winter and cope with changes in the weather. This happens all year round.



Level 1 – Having Plans all Ready in Case
Between November and March, making sure plans are all ready to help services carry on in any bad weather.



Level 2 – Warning Bad Weather on the Way

A warning when we think there will be severe weather in the next few days that will last for 2 days or more.



Level 3 – Bad Weather is Here

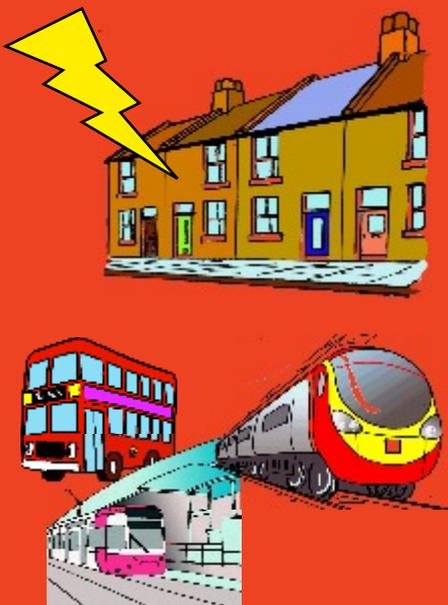
When we have weather bad enough to affect people's health and health and social care services.



Level 4 – An Emergency Due to Really Bad Weather for a Longer Time.

An emergency happens when severe weather gets really, really bad or goes on for a long time.

This will affect more than health and social care services there might be:



- power cuts
- not enough water
- buses, trains and other transport not working properly

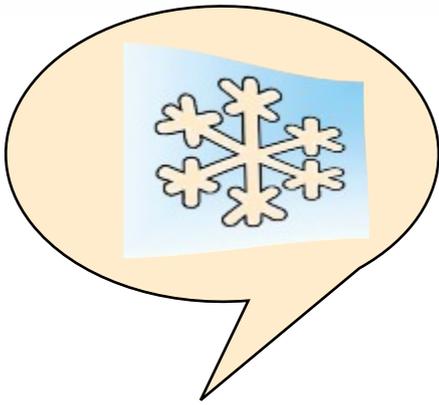


This could cause health problems for anyone

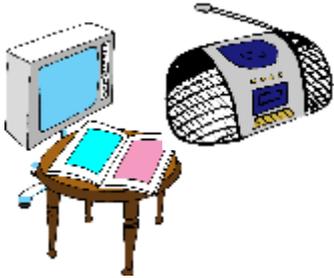


The government will decide when it is time to call a Level 4 emergency as it will mean they need other services to help as well.

Telling people about bad weather



We will tell people about bad weather by giving out a warning called an alert. The plan says the alerts must be passed on by:



- TV, radio and newspapers

NHS



- NHS services



- The NHS website



- local councils



- local services and organisations like schools, doctors and care homes.



Each local area will have its own plan for doing this.

Who is at risk?



We know the cold weather can make things worse for people who have problems with their health or where they live.



People might need more support if they are:

- over 75 years old



- children under 5



- having problems with their heart or with breathing



- people with a serious mental illness



- people with dementia (a brain disease that can affect your memory when you get older)



- people with learning disabilities



- people who find it difficult to walk



- young children



- living in poor or damp houses



- spending a lot of their money keeping warm



- older people who live on their own

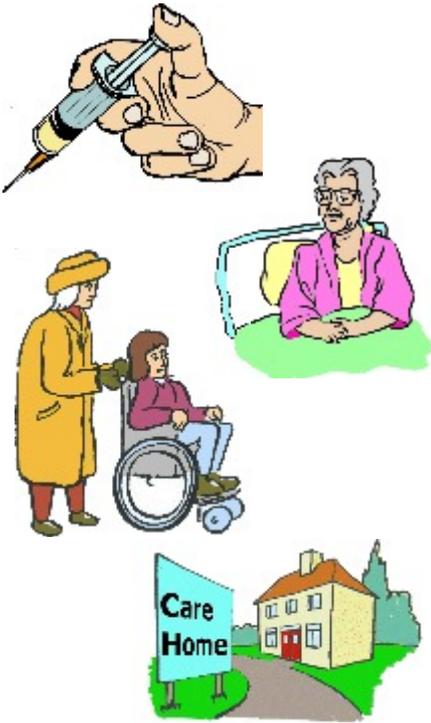


- homeless or people sleeping on the streets



- other groups that miss out on services and support.

Top tips for staying well and healthy



1. Get your flu jab. Especially if you are:
 - older
 - have a disability
 - are a carer
 - live in a care home.



2. Ask your GP or service about staying well.



3. Keep warm. Use a thermometer to check your bedroom is at least 18°C and your dayroom 21°C.



4. Look after yourself and check on neighbours to make sure they are safe, well and warm.



5. Wear lots of layers and good grip shoes or boots if you have to go outside.



6. Have hot food and drinks and keep moving about at home.



7. Get help with money. There are benefits and other help you can get to keep your house warm.



8. Have your gas heating and gas cooker checked, to make sure they are safe.

More detail about the levels



The next pages tell you what each level means and the sort of things that different people should be doing.

Although each local area will make its own plan which might be a bit different to this.

Level 0 – Getting ready for winter



NHS, local councils and other services should:

- make sure that everyone has plans ready for next year 2013.

This includes working with new organisations that will be taking over some health and social care next year.

Get people thinking about how to stay healthy in cold and winter weather.





- find out who is more at risk and help them



- have local plans for better houses that are warmer



- think about how to get community organisations to help.

NHS, council and other Staff should:



- make sure others know who might be at risk from cold weather

- help those people you do know about



- make sure all staff know about the problems with cold weather and know what to look for.



GPs should:

- help more people and staff get a flu jab
- train staff about who might be at risk from cold weather and what to do to help.



Local communities should:

- think about and support people who might be at risk in their area



- think about how cold weather might affect local places



- make sure pavements are kept clear of ice and snow



- find and train volunteers to help



- plan with others about how to keep in touch with people at risk

- find out about local services that can help and plan how to tell people about them.

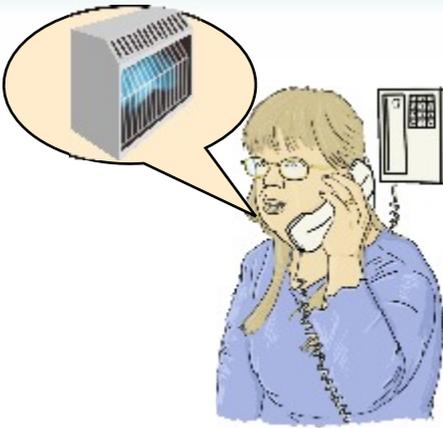


Everyone should:

- find out about staying warm and keeping your house warmer



- make sure water pipes will not freeze up



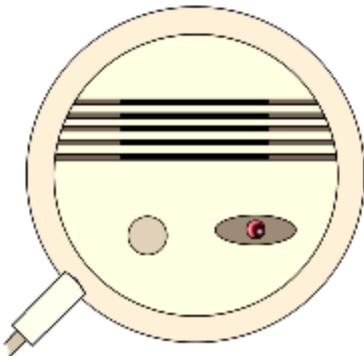
- ask for help if your heating isn't working properly



- ask for help if you don't have enough money to pay for heating



- have gas heaters and boilers serviced



- have a CO alarm as well as a fire alarm.

Government should:



- make sure different departments work well together to help plan what to do



- look at better ways to find out how many people get ill or die from cold weather



- give out good information on what to do to help.

Level 1 – Having plans all ready in case

NHS, local councils and other services should:



- look at the changes in the plans for this year



- make sure staff and other organisations know about them and are doing the right things



- help staff get flu jabs



- support communities to help



- find out what other services people need would be affected by cold weather



- make sure telephone numbers are up to date



- check they know about people who might be at risk



- check they will be supported and kept safe



- find out the roads and pavements where more accidents happen when icy. Get them gritted first.

NHS, council and other Staff should:



- know who is at risk and make any changes needed to support them



- know which key worker is in charge of getting services from different agencies working together

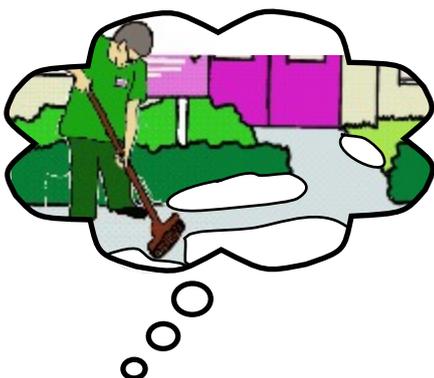


- tell people at risk, their carers and families about things that could help them

- tell other organisations that can help about people at risk



- have a flu jab



- think about what you can do to help when bad weather comes.



GPs should:

- think about how to give people information out in the surgery



- think how to cope if there are lots of people suddenly wanting help



- have a flu jab.



Local communities should:

- test their plans



- make lists of volunteers able to visit and check on people at risk

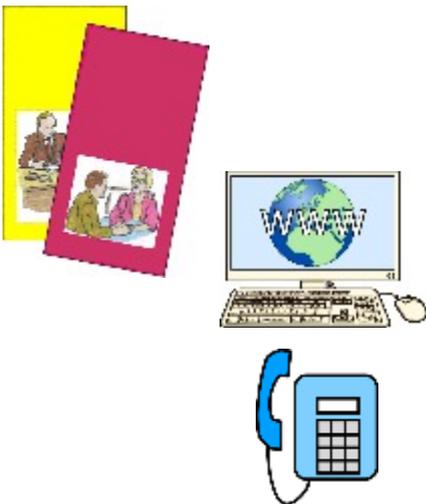


- help with information



- make sure they can carry on in bad weather.

Everyone should:



- get good information about your health.

Try NHS Choices at **www.nhs.uk**

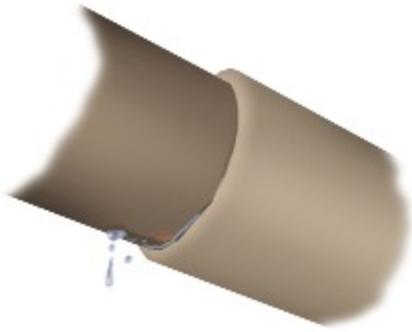
or call NHS Direct at **0845 46 47**



- check you are getting the benefits you should get



- get a flu jab if you are at risk



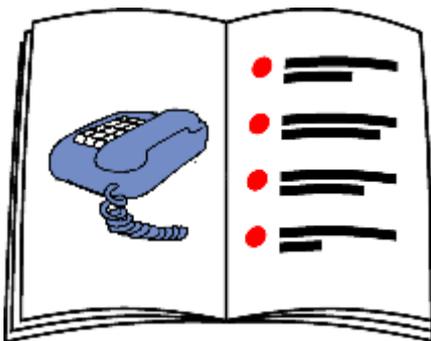
- make sure water pipes are protected



- make sure your home is warm as possible and heating works well



- ask your GP or support about keeping well and are there any other services you could get



- have a list of emergency numbers to call for help



- look out for your neighbours and help them



- think about other things you could do to help yourself or others, like volunteer.



Government and the Met Office should:

- give people information



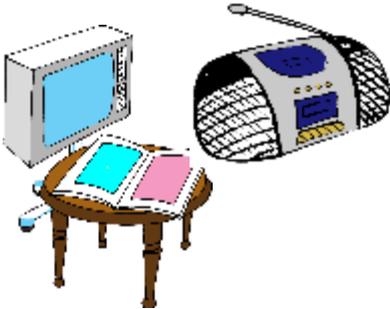
Met Office



- have the Department of Health in charge working with the Met Office and others.

Level 2 – Warning bad weather on the way

NHS, local councils and other services should:



- tell the local TV, radio and everyone else they should that bad weather is on the way



- tell staff and managers of services so they can put their plans into action, do home checks and so on

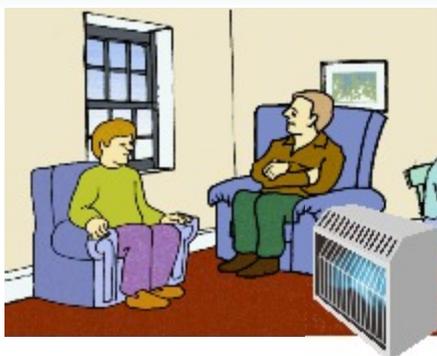
- help the community put their plans into action



- think about how to make the best use of the things you have



- think about carers and what they need



- make sure care homes are warm

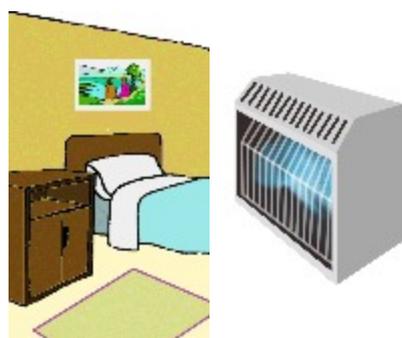


- put plans for large numbers of people needing help into action.



NHS, council and other Staff should:

- get in touch with people at risk



- check that clients' and patients' rooms are warm enough



- know what to do



- help people help themselves



- think about how the weather might affect your work and make plans



- get ready for large numbers of people needing help.



GPs should:

- make sure staff tell people about the effects of cold weather and cold homes on health to help people stay healthy



- think about how the weather might affect your work and make plans



- remind patients of the need to stay warm if they feel that room temperatures are too low.



Local communities should:

- put their plans into action

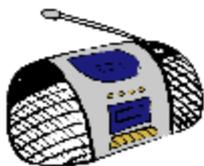


- check up on local people at risk.

Everyone should:



- keep in touch with local people at risk and make sure they have enough to eat and drink and check they have a warm room



- listen to the weather forecast



- make sure you have plenty of food and any medicine you need



- try not to go out in the cold if you are at risk



- talk with friends about clearing snow and ice for those who cannot do it themselves.

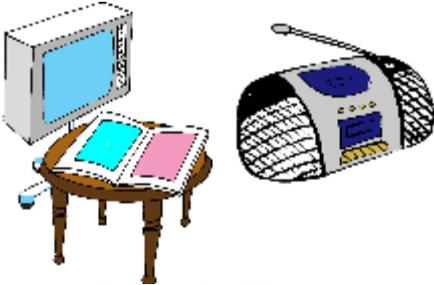


Government and the Met Office should:

- send out the level 2 alert to everyone who needs to take action.

Level 3 – Bad weather is here

NHS, local councils and other services should:



- pass on the alert to the local tv, radio and everyone else they should



- put plans into action



- check others are as well



- make sure gritting is being done where it is needed most



- follow plans that help cope with extra busy services.



NHS, council and other Staff should:

- put plans into action
- visit or phone people who are at risk in cold weather every day to check they are OK
- make sure carers are OK.



GPs should:

- work with others to cope with extra numbers of people needing help
- make sure staff know what to do.





Local communities should:

- put their plans into action
- visit or phone people who are at risk in cold weather every day to check they are OK

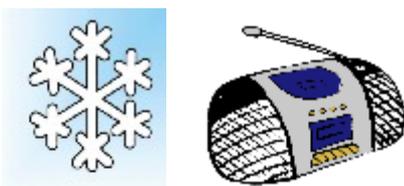


- make sure their volunteers are OK.



Everyone should:

- listen to the weather forecasts



- check that your house is warm enough: 21°C in the day and 18°C at night





- dress up warmly if you have to go out. And wear non slip shoes or boots



- tell someone where you are going



- take your mobile if you have one and make sure it is charged



- keep moving about



- have warm meals and drinks



- check people who might be at risk



- tell the emergency services if you are worried about someone



- clear ice and snow if you can.



Government and the Met Office should:

The Met office will carry on letting people know how cold it is, how cold it might get and how long it might last for.

Level 4 – An emergency due to really bad weather for a longer time



3



The government decides what people must do when the weather is this bad but everyone should:

- keep doing the things they did at Level 3
- clear snow and do other things that help services get to people
- think about other people who might need support when the weather is this bad
- make sure volunteers are OK
- do what the alerts ask you to do.





Credits

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