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**Subject:** Heads Up on news release

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Hi Rob and Chaney,

Here's a draft copy of a state status news release that we plan to send out shortly before six. Let us know if you need anything, stay warm! - Derrec

## South Carolina Winter Weather Update

**Columbia, S.C. (Friday, January 22 2016, 5:45 P.M.)** - The South Carolina Management Division continues to monitor the winter weather that is blanketing the eastern United States. Presently, Upstate and northern Midlands counties are experiencing various forms of precipitation to include rain, sleet and snow.

SC Department of Transportation crews as well as municipal and county crews are monitoring road conditions and treating roads as necessary. If you must drive, travel during daylight hours, don't travel alone and keep others informed of your schedule. When driving, decrease your speed and leave plenty of room to stop the vehicle on icy roads.

Utility companies are reporting approximately 29,848 outages throughout the state with most occurring in the upstate. If you lose power, report the outage to your company. Avoid contact with downed power lines. Ice storms can create a buildup of ice on power lines and trees. The weight of the ice can cause tree limbs and even entire trees to fall onto power lines, breaking them. Treat all utility lines that have fallen on the ground as energized and very dangerous.

Remember it is not safe to use a generator indoors. The generator should be placed outside in a well-ventilated area. Be aware of possible carbon monoxide poisoning and fire if using alternative sources for electricity, heating or cooking.

Cherokee, Pickens and Spartanburg counties and the City of Columbia have established warming shelters for people who have no means to stay warm indoors.

The State Emergency Operations Center continues limited staffing from several of the State Emergency Response Team agencies to support any requests for state assistance.

### **SCEMD encourages citizens to continue winter safety precautions including:**

- Check on anyone who may need extra help during winter weather.
- Call 911 for life-threatening emergencies only.
- Remember to keep a full charge on your cell phone and mobile devices so that they can be used during an emergency.
- Motorists should be especially careful on bridges, overpasses and infrequently traveled roadways, which tend to freeze first. Even at temperatures above freezing, if the conditions are wet, you might encounter ice in shady areas or on exposed roadways like bridges.
- If you lose power, know how to report the outage to your utility company and have alternate, safe means of staying warm.
- Monitor local media for information about warming shelters that have been opened by county emergency managers.
- Consider the safety of pets during a winter storm by providing a warm place indoors for them to stay.
- Keep alternative heating sources prepared. If you have a fireplace, store a good supply of dry, seasoned wood. Keep fire extinguishers on hand, and make sure your family knows how to use them.

- Properly vent kerosene heaters and keep any electric generators OUTSIDE and away from any open windows or doors to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Also, do not burn charcoal indoors. Carbon monoxide poisoning can result from charcoal fumes indoors.
- Never operate a portable generator indoors.
- Keep fresh batteries on hand to use with flashlights and NOAA tone-alert weather radios.
- Provide some options for outdoor pets and domestic animals to stay warm.
- Follow @SCEMD social feeds at [www.facebook.com/SCEMD](http://www.facebook.com/SCEMD) and [www.twitter.com/SCEMD](http://www.twitter.com/SCEMD)
- The official South Carolina Severe Winter Weather Guide is available at any Walgreen's store in the state and for download at [www.scemd.org](http://www.scemd.org).

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*"South Carolina's emergency management program minimizes loss of life and property damage from all-hazard incidents."*

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