

Dufferin County prepares for winter weather conditions, shares safety tips

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With winter weather on the horizon, Dufferin County is preparing to keep the community safe and the County roads clear so residents and visitors alike can get where they need to go safely all winter long.

Dufferin County continues to experience increasing wilder weather events, but the County is prepared to keep county roads clear and our community safe all winter long. The County's winter operations team has been working hard to ensure we are prepared when winter weather arrives, said Wade Mills, Warden of Dufferin County. Everyone in our community has a role to play in making the season safe and enjoyable. Residents are reminded to give snowplows lots of space, not follow too closely and never try to pass a plow.

When it comes to emergency preparedness during winter weather, the County of Dufferin is sharing safety tips to follow should residents need to travel, including:

- Clear vehicles of any ice or snow before driving;
- Drive according to weather conditions by slowing down and keeping a distance from other vehicles
- Keeping an emergency kit in all vehicles with items such as a shovel, blanket, and flashlight
- Ensure all vehicles have properly inflated snow tires

With winter storms, power outages may occur, so residents are encouraged to have a 72-hour emergency kit prepared in their home with items including:

- Battery-powered radio and extra batteries
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Lightweight blankets
- First aid kit
- Non-perishable snacks
- A-lister of medications

In October, the County of Dufferin announced eight new municipal emergency support (ESS) trailers to provide support to local residents during crisis situations. The trailers contain equipment and provisions to enable volunteers to provide support to up to 50 people per trailer in emergencies.

The safety of Dufferin residents is a top County priority, and we are dedicated to ensuring anyone traveling within the County gets where they need to go safely. We encourage our community to keep safety top of mind this winter – keep an emergency kit in your car and a 72-hour emergency kit in your home, and if you are interested in volunteering to help in the event of an emergency, contact the County's Emergency Preparedness Team, said Sonya Pritchard, chief administrative officer of Dufferin County.

The County of Dufferin Public Works team is responsible for all County roads and some local roads in Dufferin County's eight municipalities. In total, Dufferin is responsible for clearing roughly 700 lane kilometres of County roads during each winter weather event.

The County of Dufferin has shared some tips for residents to stay safe, including giving snowplows lots of space and not following too closely; never trying to pass a working snow plow; and children should never play in, on or near snowbanks on the sides of roads.

Residents are also reminded to check that mailboxes and posts are in good repair before plows hit the County roads. Metal is the preferred material for rural mailboxes, and there should be a solid connection from the box to a 6-inch top and a wood post in good condition. The front of the mailbox must be a minimum of three feet off the edge of the pavement.

To get updates on County Road winter maintenance, visit www.dufferincounty.ca. Anyone who may be interested in volunteering to help if an emergency strikes is encouraged to contact emergency.managment@dufferincounty.ca. to learn more.