

Safety precautions

- Be prepared when the snow hits the region by paying attention to the following health and safety precautions for children and adults alike:
- Dress warmly in loose-fitting layers of clothing, wearing a hat, scarf, boots, gloves, and ear-muffs or a head band. This will protect you against frostbite and hypothermia - the dangerous lowering of body temperature, which are the two most common health problems caused by cold-weather exposure.
- Clear snow and ice from your sidewalk to make it safe for your family and neighbours.
- Shovelling snow, particularly when it's wet and heavy, is a strenuous and extremely dangerous activity for anyone who is not physically fit. People with a history of heart disease or high blood pressure should especially avoid shovelling snow.
- Snow-blowers are an easier and more efficient method of snow removal but must be used carefully. Shut the engine off and wait for all moving parts to stop before unclogging the discharge chute. Use a stick, not your hands or feet, to remove obstructions. Always clear the area first of objects under the snow that might be picked up and thrown.
- Avoid injuries from sledding or snowboarding by selecting a slope free of obstacles such as fences, stumps, rocks, logs and other objects that may be hidden under the snow. Make sure the slope is snow-packed, not icy, with a long flat runoff for safe and smooth stopping.
- Never snowboard in a head-first position, in the street or anywhere near traffic. Never hitch a ride to a moving car or other vehicle.
- Wearing a helmet reduces the risk of serious head injury in a fall or mishap and is recommended for sledding, skating, skiing and other such as recreational activities.
- Listen to your body. If you experience any shortness of breath, dizziness, or chest discomfort, stop immediately and seek medical care.
- Drink plenty of water so that you're well hydrated. Don't drink caffeine or alcohol, or use nicotine products immediately before shovelling.
- Equip your car for driving in snowy conditions. That means cleaning snow off the car before you start driving, making sure your windshield wipers work well, cleaning off your headlights, and using snow tires or chains if you need them. And stock your trunk with a shovel, tow rope, ground sheet (for fitting chains), rubber gloves, plastic ice scraper, blanket, and flashlight.

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Cooperative Governance
Traditional Affairs

DISASTER AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

SNOW



Snow is made of tiny crystals of frozen water vapour. Lots of ice crystals joined together makes a snowflake. Snowflakes come in all different shapes, and no two snowflakes are ever exactly the same. It usually snows in winter.



WHAT IS SNOW?



- Snow is made of tiny crystals of frozen water vapor. Lots of ice crystals joined together makes a snowflake. Snowflakes come in all different shapes, and no two snowflakes are ever exactly the same. It usually snows in August and winter.

Which South African provinces and neighbouring states are affected by snow?

- The areas that are mostly affected by snow in South Africa are the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, Western Cape and the Lesotho mountains.
- NB: However due to climate change most parts of the country might be affected therefore it is important to always be ready.

USES OF SNOW



- Snow has many uses in nature. A thick layer of snow does not allow heat to escape from the ground beneath it. It works like a blanket to save plants and animals from the damage caused by freezing temperatures.
- Although it may be cold above the ground, snow is a good insulator, and keeps the heat underground in.
- Snow is also a very useful source of water supply, especially in hot, dry countries.
- Deep layers of snow on high mountains will not melt until late spring or early summer.

- Rivers like the Nile in Africa, and the Indus in India, would dry up in hot weather without supplies of melting snow.
- Another use of snow is all the fun you can have when the ground is covered in snow.

SNOW CAN BE DANGEROUS

- Snow can be dangerous for farm animals when it is very heavy, and difficult to walk through. It covers the food they eat and freezes the water.
- Snow is dangerous for traffic when it piles up on the roads. It can be very dangerous as an avalanche. People have been killed by avalanches.
- Snow can also reduce traffic visibility.
- Road closures caused by heavy snowfall can have high economic costs.
- When a road closes, it diverts travellers away from businesses on or near that road. The closure of a road also causes delays for drivers who are going to work or delivering freight.
- One less accessible road can adversely affect the entire community.

HOW TO PREDICT SNOW

- **Listen to weather alerts and warnings from the South Africa Weather Services and your local Disaster Management Centre.**
- **Watch the skies** - If you notice that the air is colder and the clouds look like rain clouds (normal clouds but ones that are grey) but are hanging lower in the sky than usual, then you can usually expect snow within the next few days.
- **Watch animals** - Animals seem to be very good at predicting the weather. For an easy way into the sciences of weather, just watch them. The birds tend to huddle together on power-lines and tree branches. They also fly lower because of the low clouds. Animals often become very still and quiet right before a snowfall so listen for silence. If it sounds unusually quiet (dog's not barking, chipmunks quiet, birds not singing) then bundle up.
- **Watch the weather channel** - It's the easiest and most used method. Watch the news or the weather network. You can watch it on TV, find it online or hear from radio stations.
- **Watch for a halo around the moon** - Have you ever seen a halo around the moon or even sometimes around the sun? What happens is that clouds that contain ice crystals (possibly snow clouds) form a layer. The ice crystals form light prisms that can be seen sometimes as a white or sometimes a coloured halo around the sun or the moon.
- **Feel the change in wind direction** - If you have already noticed that the clouds are low or that it is getting chillier, pay attention to which direction the winds are blowing. If you notice a change in the direction of the wind you can usually expect a change in weather. If the wind is blowing from the south or the east it often means that the weather is going to get worse.