



Office of the Governor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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February 12, 2021

Top state emergency management official issues warning about severe weekend weather

SANTA FE – The New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is urging New Mexicans to be advised of potential severe winter weather beginning this weekend and to prepare accordingly for what forecasters have said could be record low temperatures and hazardous high winds in the northern, central and eastern part of the state.

“Please be prepared for freezing temperatures and potential road closures or other roadway impacts through the weekend and into early next week,” said DHSEM Secretary Bianca Ortiz Wertheim. “If you can avoid traveling through the end of this cold spell, please do so. Don’t take on the cold, wind and snow. Wind gusts and cold will make driving a risk. Please stay informed about risks in your local area, particularly the risk of difficult driving conditions.”

DHSEM advises New Mexicans to consider the following ahead of the weekend:

- Prepare to **have enough food on hand** for a few days in home to avoid traveling in unsafe conditions;
- Consider keeping a water faucet dripping slowly to **reduce the risk of frozen pipes**;
- Ensure you **have warm winter supplies**, like a heavy coat and gloves, and other warming supplies on hand;
- If you are able, **check on your neighbors**;
- **Do not travel during the inclement weather** unless it is absolutely necessary for health or welfare; and
- If you must travel, when driving, slow down and use caution as road conditions can change quickly.

The National Weather Service has forecast snow and cold temperatures for the northern and central parts of the state beginning late Saturday. Freezing temperatures are forecast for eastern parts of the state through Tuesday afternoon, with dangerous wind chill readings for east, central and northeast New Mexico forecast through Sunday.

Secretary Ortiz Wertheim and the state Emergency Operations Center are in regular communication with local emergency managers and utility companies as part of standard preparations for inclement or dangerous weather.

New Mexicans are advised to monitor weather conditions with the help of the National Weather Service at weather.gov and road conditions by dialing the New Mexico Road Advisory Hotline at **5-1-1** or visiting nmroads.com.

“The Department of Transportation carefully monitors the weather to determine the amount of person and machine power needed to keep the roads safe and clear,” said Transportation Secretary Mike Sandoval. “Crews plan days in advance, preparing snowplows, loading them with salt and cinder. When inclement weather rolls in, DOT crews hit the roads day and night, safely clearing the way for the traveling public. Please help these dedicated professionals keep you and our roads safe by limiting travel during inclement weather. If you must travel, please keep at least 50 feet away from plows.”

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