



## District 2 Public Health

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Banks, Dawson, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union and White Counties

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Inclement Weather Closure**

*Stay Safe by Being Prepared*

Due to expected inclement weather, all District 2 Public Health offices will be closed on Monday, January 26, 2026. This includes all county health departments, environmental health offices, WIC offices, the children with special needs office, and the District Office. As additional updates are available, they will be shared on District 2 Public Health social media outlets and the website: <https://phdistrict2.org/>. Please continue to monitor weather updates from local authorities and remain prepared for potential wintry conditions across North Georgia.

A winter storm can involve a combination of snow, high winds, freezing rain, and/or sleet (NOAA). Dangerous hazards can form including: power outages, hazardous road conditions, and extremely cold temperatures. Strong winds and ice can weigh down power lines and tree branches, causing outages that may last hours or even days. Power interruptions can disrupt medical devices that rely on electricity and compromise refrigerated food and medications. Additionally, freezing temperatures increase the risk of cold-related illnesses including frostbite and hypothermia. Prepare for potential winter weather hazards with the following tips from Ready.gov and the CDC below.

#### Prepare Yourself and Your Loved Ones:

- Make sure to have enough medication to last a winter storm and note down important prescriptions.
  - Dialysis patients and oxygen patients should ensure access to alternate power sources to charge power-dependent medical devices.
- Gather supplies for an emergency kit:
  - nonperishable food, water, flashlight, phone charger, candles, first-aid kit, vital documents, pet essentials, batteries for flashlight, and radio

- Enable Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) on your phone or follow weather updates. Keep your phone charged, and do not charge devices from your car inside a closed garage
- Wear layers of loose, dry clothing to stay warm and to prevent hypothermia and frostbite. Vulnerable areas to frostbite include nose, ears, cheeks, chin, toes, and fingers.
- At risk populations: newborns, individuals with chronic illnesses, elderly individuals, outdoor workers, and unhoused individuals are more vulnerable to the cold because they are less able to regulate their body temperature. Dress warm and consume warm food and beverages.

#### Prepare Your Home:

- Only use generators outdoors, at least 20 feet away from your home, to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Remove all patio furniture and keep cars in the garage if applicable.
- During a power outage, the refrigerator will keep food safe for close to 4 hours. A full freezer will hold its temperature for about 48 hours, and a half freezer will hold its temperature for about 24 hours (USDA). If the food has an unusual color, smell, or texture, throw it out.
- Let pipes drip overnight to prevent frozen pipes.
- Keep burnable items 3 feet away from space heaters, fireplaces, or wooden stoves.
- Do not heat the home with propane grills, gas stove, or the oven.
- Disconnect appliances and electronics to avoid damage from electrical surges.
- To retain heat, open curtains, close doors, and place rolled towels at the bottom of all doors.
- If temperatures become dangerously cold and you cannot safely heat your home, seek a warming shelter or community location with power.

#### Prepare Your Vehicle:

- Follow guidance from local authorities regarding travel. Avoid driving on hazardous, icy roads.
- Refuel cars.
- Make a car emergency kit and store it in your car:
  - Non-perishable snacks and water, phone charger, blanket, warm clothes, jumper cables, ice scraper, sand, spare tire, tow rope, and first aid kit

#### Preparedness for Business Vendors:

- Power and water service interruptions may affect your business. Power outages may result in food being discarded if not held at the proper temperature.
- Water interruptions include: no water, boil water advisories, and all other water alerts.
- Food Service operations affected by these interruptions should not continue unless an approved emergency plan is in place.
- Impacted Tourist Accommodation facilities should provide potable water to occupants for consumption, brushing teeth, and routine hygiene.
- If your facility is impacted by a power outage or water issue of any type, please discontinue service, and notify your local Environmental Health Office.
- Planning guidance for how to handle water interruptions or power outages is available here: [Emergency Preparedness FAQs | Georgia Department of Public Health](#)

To learn more about winter storms, please visit: <https://www.ready.gov/winter-ready>

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