

**WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for January 9, 2023**  
**Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.**

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about preparing for winter, and as always look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

What a roller coaster ride we have had with outside temperatures over the past few weeks. With the warm weather last week, it was almost hard to remember that winter is beginning not ending. So with a few days here of relatively mild weather, are there things you could be doing to make sure you are prepared for more challenging conditions?

**Vehicles:** The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather recommends these tips to prepare your vehicle for these winter months.

- Check your headlights, taillights, and turn signals. Replace foggy, hazy, or damaged lens covers to improve visibility.
- Check your windshield wipers. If your wipers are leaving streaks of water on the windshield, or if the wiper-blade rubber shows signs of cracking or stiffness, replace them with a new set.
- Keep the battery in good shape. Cold temperatures reduce the battery's cranking power. Have the battery power and its fluid levels checked.

Consider keeping the following supplies in your vehicle:

- Snow brush and ice scraper
- Extra windshield fluid
- Sand or non-clumping cat litter to help with tire traction
- Emergency flares, shovel, state map
- Booster (jumper) cables
- Bottled water or juice / Nonperishable high-energy foods (granola bars, raisins, peanut butter, or cheese crackers)
- First-aid kit and necessary medications

- Extra clothing, particularly boots, hats and gloves or mittens
- Cell phone and car charger
- Battery-powered radio, flashlight and extra batteries
- Blanket or sleeping bag
- Fire extinguisher (5-lb, A-B-C type)

Outside: Remember that snow removal is strenuous work. Treat snow shoveling like the workout that it is. It may sound silly, but you should warm up your muscles before shoveling by walking and stretching your arms and legs for a few minutes. Warm muscles are less likely to be injured and work more efficiently.

Be sure to wear sturdy shoes or boots with rugged soles to help prevent slips and falls. If you become short of breath while shoveling, stop and rest. And if you feel any tightness in your chest or become dizzy, stop immediately and call for help.

Inside: The CDC also has some good tips for our homes. Space heaters can be helpful, but they certainly have their dangers. Use electric space heaters with automatic shut-off switches and non-glowing elements. Make sure to keep them at least 3 feet away from any flammable materials, like curtains or blankets. Avoid using extension cords with space heaters and make sure that the cord is not a tripping hazard.

One way to conserve heat is simply to block off rooms you don't really use that often. When I was young, I remember my mom would hang quilts from the doorways of a couple of rooms that we didn't use much. Just be certain that there are no concerns of freezing pipes.

We also tend to use candles more often in winter. The National Fire Protection Association estimates an average of 20 home fires caused by candles are reported each day. Almost a quarter of these fires happen in December and January. There is something lovely about a burning candle, but flameless candles do a pretty good job of recreating the same ambience and are much safer.

And finally, be sure to check in on elderly neighbors and relatives. Our ability to feel a change in temperature decreases with age, and older adults are more susceptible to health problems caused by cold.

If you choose just one thing to tackle from these suggestions, you will be better prepared for the cold weather that winter is still bound to bring our way.

And now let's look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension. Direct food marketing in Ohio is hot. The latest USDA survey identified over 7,000 Ohio farms with direct food sales—third highest in the nation. OSU Extension is hosting a three-part webinar series on “Starting a Food Business,” to help producers wanting to sell home-based and farm-raised foods directly to consumers and retailers. I hope you'll join me for this free webinar series which includes *Start-Up Basics* on January 24, *Selling Home-Based Foods* on February 29 and *Selling Meat and Poultry* on March 28. Find details and the registration link at [go.osu.edu/foodbusiness](http://go.osu.edu/foodbusiness) .

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help educate and improve our families, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at [coshocton.osu.edu](http://coshocton.osu.edu). Make it a healthy day!