



Public Health  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

## Winter Safety

Winter is almost here. Take steps to prepare for the coming winter storms and cold temperatures that are soon to settle in. During the frigid months, many people prefer to stay indoors and out of the elements, but staying inside your home is no guarantee of staying safe and warm if it is not properly prepared. Things to do to winterize your home include:

- Insulate drafty windows and water lines that may potentially freeze.
- Have your heating system cleaned and checked for proper functioning.
- Inspect and clean fireplaces and chimneys.
- Check batteries in smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Stock pantry with non-perishable items and water.



If you will be traveling and spending time outdoors this winter follow these tips to keep you and your family safe.

- Before winter arrives service your car and check tire tread.
- Do not let your gas tank get low.
- Prepare an emergency kit to keep in your car that has blankets, extra hats and mittens, food and water, shovel, sand or cat litter, flashlights and batteries, flares, and first-aid kit.
- If traveling in bad weather, inform someone of your route and expected time of arrival.

If you do spend time outdoors it is important to wear appropriate clothing to keep yourself warm. Wearing gloves, hat, scarf, and several layers of clothes will keep the body warm and protect the skin from the harsh cold and wind.

Wearing these items will not only keep you warm and safe, but will help to prevent hypothermia and frostbite. Prolonged exposure to cold will cause



the body to lose heat which could result in hypothermia, known as an abnormally low body temperature. Signs of hypothermia are shivering, confusion, slurred speech,

drowsiness, and red and cold skin.

Frostbite occurs when the skin becomes frozen from exposure to wind and cold temperatures. Frostbite causes a loss of color and feeling, and commonly occurs on the nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, or toes. If you suspect you or someone else has either hypothermia or frostbite, seek medical attention.

When working or playing out in the cold weather it is important to pay attention to your body. Cold weather puts extra stress on the body and heart. Individuals with heart disease or high blood pressure should be extra cautious in the cold. Consult with your physician and follow the advice and guidelines about working out and performing physical tasks such as shoveling snow during the colder months.

*Stay warm and have a safe winter!*

## Live Healthy Iowa

Need a little motivation to live healthier and be more active in 2014? Sign up and join the Live Healthy Iowa 10 Week Wellness Challenge that runs from January 27 to April 4. For a fee of \$20, participants will receive a challenge t-shirt, weekly motivational emails, unlimited access to recipes, workouts, and health information, free registration for Winter and Summer Iowa Games Fitness Walks, magazine subscription, and chances to win a variety of small and large prizes! All you need to do is sign-up and join a team, then track your activity minutes and/or weight loss through the Live Healthy Iowa website.

Registration opens December 16, 2013, so here is how to get started:

1. Build or join a team of 2 to 10 people and choose a team name.
2. Go to [www.livehealthyiowa.org](http://www.livehealthyiowa.org) and click 'Join Today'. If there are multiple teams formed from one location or organization, a group ID number will be given to link the teams together.
3. Complete the required registration information and submit payment online.



Join thousands of Iowans competing in this simple, affordable, and fun challenge!

## A Note From The Wapsi River Environmental Education Center:

### *Take It Outside!*

Winter is in full swing, and with it comes the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors and all it has to offer. The Scott County parks system including the Wapsi River Center offers low-impact, outdoor recreational opportunities that sustain both a healthy environment as well as a healthy body. Whether you enjoy bird watching as the migrations pass, hiking along fall colors, or the smell of a campfire, these natural resource-based activities aim to connect people with nature in a responsible and enjoyable way (not to mention, at low or no cost!).

As the season changes, the Wapsi River Center will be offering park activities such as heart-healthy cross country skiing and snowshoeing, not to mention the open trails for hiking. You may find details by visiting: <http://www.scottcountyiowa.com/conservation/> and look under the "Events" section or to look up the latest issue of the *W.R.E.N.*—*Dave Murcia, Naturalist/Director, Wapsi River Center*

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- *Scott County Board of Health Meeting, Scott County Administrative Center, 1st Floor Boardroom, 12:00PM on Thursday, December 19, 2013.*
- *Scott County Health Department is closed December 24 & 25, 2013, in observance of Christmas Eve and Christmas.*

#### OUR MISSION:

The Scott County Health Department is committed to promoting, protecting and preserving the health of the community by providing leadership and direction as advocates for the individual, the family, the community and the environment we serve.

#### OUR VISION:

As recognized and respected leaders in serving and protecting our citizens, we at the Scott County Health Department are committed to a safer, healthier community and environment. In so doing, we provide a multitude of services with Professionalism, Responsiveness, Involvement, Dedication, and Excellence.

## SCOTT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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