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| February 2024 |
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| Region Five Individual and Community Preparedness banner |

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**Navigating the Chill: Essential Tips for Staying Safe this Winter**As winter's icy grip tightens, it brings with it a series of challenges that underscore the importance of thorough preparation. Annually, the United States witnesses hundreds of cold-related deaths, a stark reminder of the serious health risks associated with winter weather. Slip-and-fall incidents, car accidents on icy roads, and other weather-related mishaps contribute to an increased rate of emergency room visits during the colder months.Likewise, different regions experience varying levels of snowfall. In the Midwest we may see several feet of snow during the winter months, impacting daily life and necessitating extensive snow removal efforts.As we delve into the winter season, these statistics serve as a compelling call to action, urging us to prepare ourselves against the challenges that accompany winter. Whether you're a seasoned winter veteran or new to the frosty weather, here are some essential tips to be winer ready!* **Bundle Up:** Dressing in layers is key to staying warm. Make sure to wear insulated clothing, a hat, gloves, and a scarf to protect exposed skin.
* **Be Aware of Ice:** Keep a close eye on your surroundings, especially when walking or driving. Ice patches can be deceptive and catch you off guard. Walk carefully, and drive at reduced speeds in icy conditions.
* **Fortify Your Home:** Seal drafts, insulate, and keep doors and windows closed to maintain a warm indoor environment.
* **Prepare Your Vehicle:** Equip it with essentials like an emergency kit, blankets, and non-perishable snacks for safe winter travel.
* **Stay Informed:** Keep an eye on weather forecasts to plan outdoor activities during milder conditions.
* **Watch for Signs of Hypothermia:** Learn the signs of hypothermia, which include shivering, confusion, and drowsiness. If you or someone else shows these symptoms, seek warmth immediately.
* **Check on Vulnerable Neighbors:** Keep an eye out for elderly neighbors or those who may need assistance. Extreme cold can be particularly challenging for certain groups, so offer help where you can.

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| dVisit [#WinterReady | Ready.gov](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDAsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LnJlYWR5Lmdvdi93aW50ZXItcmVhZHkiLCJidWxsZXRpbl9pZCI6IjIwMjQwMjAyLjg5NTUzMzMxIn0.a-_gMt1mqRZRTrmWLAYzVkpeIZggYV-YtoKOAov3JeY/s/489364607/br/236454511626-l__;!!NcXZSU8rfchoEksI!Za1S2QugIChifx_RbnT897zeAm8Xg_AOqEy0nYxzWRulqqm4YELyw3M-iJov9XfO5tt9iQBsZ9JWJMYTEfRCUqXbg0VE$) for more tips on winter preparedness.  **Helpful Resources:*** [Fall and Winter Energy-Saving Tips | Department of Energy](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDEsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LmVuZXJneS5nb3YvZW5lcmd5c2F2ZXIvZmFsbC1hbmQtd2ludGVyLWVuZXJneS1zYXZpbmctdGlwcyIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyNDAyMDIuODk1NTMzMzEifQ.kdfeAIsD7pleB0XPxksYrx7ZT8QXW5xeuyQMpMUXE7U/s/489364607/br/236454511626-l__;!!NcXZSU8rfchoEksI!Za1S2QugIChifx_RbnT897zeAm8Xg_AOqEy0nYxzWRulqqm4YELyw3M-iJov9XfO5tt9iQBsZ9JWJMYTEfRCUp3PUu3p$)
* [Winter Driving Tips (nhtsa.gov)](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDIsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3Lm5odHNhLmdvdi9zaXRlcy9uaHRzYS5nb3YvZmlsZXMvMjAyMy0xMS9XaW50ZXItV2VhdGhlci1Ecml2aW5nLVRpcHMtMjAyMy0yMDI0LnBkZiIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyNDAyMDIuODk1NTMzMzEifQ.zEJEjT3ttO-MtqdmZ-cfr5p_DizC1_Vtjm_h9OSQmHk/s/489364607/br/236454511626-l__;!!NcXZSU8rfchoEksI!Za1S2QugIChifx_RbnT897zeAm8Xg_AOqEy0nYxzWRulqqm4YELyw3M-iJov9XfO5tt9iQBsZ9JWJMYTEfRCUpssPJwV$)
* [Hypothermia|Winter Weather (cdc.gov)](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDMsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LmNkYy5nb3YvZGlzYXN0ZXJzL3dpbnRlci9zdGF5c2FmZS9oeXBvdGhlcm1pYS5odG1sP0NEQ19BQV9yZWZWYWw9aHR0cHMlM0ElMkYlMkZ3d3cuY2RjLmdvdiUyRmRpc2FzdGVycyUyRndpbnRlciUyRnN0YXlzYWZlJTJGZnJvc3RiaXRlLmh0bWwiLCJidWxsZXRpbl9pZCI6IjIwMjQwMjAyLjg5NTUzMzMxIn0.gfiPi53McRewfzZer4HQfvGV8U5ipKJAZryrMbB42P8/s/489364607/br/236454511626-l__;!!NcXZSU8rfchoEksI!Za1S2QugIChifx_RbnT897zeAm8Xg_AOqEy0nYxzWRulqqm4YELyw3M-iJov9XfO5tt9iQBsZ9JWJMYTEfRCUma53R3b$)
* [Preparing for a Winter Storm|Winter Weather (cdc.gov)](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDQsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LmNkYy5nb3YvZGlzYXN0ZXJzL3dpbnRlci9iZWZvcmVzdG9ybS9wcmVwYXJlaG9tZS5odG1sIiwiYnVsbGV0aW5faWQiOiIyMDI0MDIwMi44OTU1MzMzMSJ9.eJjiqmfOABb6zL9GeO2za9w54HOTxKO4JMk59I0r0xM/s/489364607/br/236454511626-l__;!!NcXZSU8rfchoEksI!Za1S2QugIChifx_RbnT897zeAm8Xg_AOqEy0nYxzWRulqqm4YELyw3M-iJov9XfO5tt9iQBsZ9JWJMYTEfRCUgb3YZEN$)
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**FEMA is Accepting Youth Preparedness Council Applications**The FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Division is accepting applications for the Youth Preparedness Council. The online application process is open, and students must complete their applications by March 4.  Teens in grades eight through 11 who are interested in applying for the YPC can learn more about the process and have their questions answered in a webinar at 5 p.m. ET on Jan. 25. The webinar will walk students through the application process and give applicants a glimpse of what it’s like to be on the YPC. Please register for this webinar in advance by visiting this Zoom [link](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDUsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vZmVtYS56b29tZ292LmNvbS9tZWV0aW5nL3JlZ2lzdGVyL3ZKSXNmLXlycXpnb0gwejI1LXhBeWJmd296X0xWOGFBUVlvIiwiYnVsbGV0aW5faWQiOiIyMDI0MDIwMi44OTU1MzMzMSJ9.re6YgDfWgiEdb7Wz8uT0BdvdQTcgfCgbOkUHzKRplnY/s/489364607/br/236454511626-l__;!!NcXZSU8rfchoEksI!Za1S2QugIChifx_RbnT897zeAm8Xg_AOqEy0nYxzWRulqqm4YELyw3M-iJov9XfO5tt9iQBsZ9JWJMYTEfRCUjDQlkvs$). During their one-year term, council members collaborate virtually with each other to develop projects that promote preparedness on a local and national scale. Members will also attend the council summit in July of 2025 and engage with top leaders within FEMA, the federal government, and national non-profit organizations.  If you know a teen interested in preparedness and community service, encourage them to apply.

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| c  To learn more about the Youth Preparedness Council, visit [https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/individuals-communities/youth-preparedness-council](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDYsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LmZlbWEuZ292L2VtZXJnZW5jeS1tYW5hZ2Vycy9pbmRpdmlkdWFscy1jb21tdW5pdGllcy95b3V0aC1wcmVwYXJlZG5lc3MtY291bmNpbCIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyNDAyMDIuODk1NTMzMzEifQ._roeoHZsmBp5iUrGvTdPyL4rRajfrOEPsZf9snFYRFI/s/489364607/br/236454511626-l__;!!NcXZSU8rfchoEksI!Za1S2QugIChifx_RbnT897zeAm8Xg_AOqEy0nYxzWRulqqm4YELyw3M-iJov9XfO5tt9iQBsZ9JWJMYTEfRCUiJNN6_4$).  |

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**FEMA Releases “Disaster Mind” Game**A new educational game designed to teach high school students about decision-making during disasters is available online at FEMA.gov/DisasterMind. *Disaster Mind*was developed by FEMA Region 8 in partnership with the iThrive Games Foundation, a Massachusetts-based nonprofit that uses game design and game-based learning tools to help students develop skillsets that support their mental health and wellbeing.*Disaster Mind* challenges and encourages participants to make critical decisions in the face of three simulated disaster scenarios: a flood, wildfire, and blizzard. Complicating their quest, a mysterious guide weaves twists and turns along the way.Emergency managers and educators can implement the game and [supporting educational materials](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDcsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vcHJlemkuY29tL3ZpZXcvTGtwUG5rejE4MVRVRmxFV21LOW4vIiwiYnVsbGV0aW5faWQiOiIyMDI0MDIwMi44OTU1MzMzMSJ9.Sz0Yk2AmvmICGm1mNXQP-Ghpl_5K_vIQsmoUKaB4zXE/s/489364607/br/236454511626-l__;!!NcXZSU8rfchoEksI!Za1S2QugIChifx_RbnT897zeAm8Xg_AOqEy0nYxzWRulqqm4YELyw3M-iJov9XfO5tt9iQBsZ9JWJMYTEfRCUpsP7lQA$) in any existing disaster readiness or preparedness curricula. Register for an upcoming webinar to learn how to use the game:

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| * disaster mind Tuesday, February 13, at 10 a.m. MT Disaster Mind Outreach and Information Webinar [https://fema.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJIsf-uvqzMiGdOWwBVnet0IJs1ec5bbUT0](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDgsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vZmVtYS56b29tZ292LmNvbS9tZWV0aW5nL3JlZ2lzdGVyL3ZKSXNmLXV2cXpNaUdkT1d3QlZuZXQwSUpzMWVjNWJiVVQwIiwiYnVsbGV0aW5faWQiOiIyMDI0MDIwMi44OTU1MzMzMSJ9.LZjf3Dfcv6OMFXVYYf65ZaWz7DGhMOnBlEIVbWg77Rw/s/489364607/br/236454511626-l__;!!NcXZSU8rfchoEksI!Za1S2QugIChifx_RbnT897zeAm8Xg_AOqEy0nYxzWRulqqm4YELyw3M-iJov9XfO5tt9iQBsZ9JWJMYTEfRCUtfyDRZe$).
* Wednesday, Tuesday, March 5, at 1 p.m. MT Disaster Mind Outreach and Information Webinar [https://fema.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJIsdeqppj0rHFf1yThg8HtQ9jvxVYz9sGk](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDksInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vZmVtYS56b29tZ292LmNvbS9tZWV0aW5nL3JlZ2lzdGVyL3ZKSXNkZXFwcGowckhGZjF5VGhnOEh0UTlqdnhWWXo5c0drIiwiYnVsbGV0aW5faWQiOiIyMDI0MDIwMi44OTU1MzMzMSJ9.R1tA7p5ZjDx4QGklCfMxiFzh00AYdpB4_9eKMd964R4/s/489364607/br/236454511626-l__;!!NcXZSU8rfchoEksI!Za1S2QugIChifx_RbnT897zeAm8Xg_AOqEy0nYxzWRulqqm4YELyw3M-iJov9XfO5tt9iQBsZ9JWJMYTEfRCUg06K-Vs$).
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**FEMA Seeks Volunteers for the BRIC Virtual National Review Panels**

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| fFEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance branch is soliciting volunteers from state, local, tribal and territorial governments and other federal agencies to participate in the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) virtual national review panels. Volunteers will leverage their mitigation experience and expertise to determine how sub-applicants meet BRIC qualitative evaluation criteria. The panels will run in weekly segments from **April 8 - May 3, 2024**, on Zoom. Each panelist will serve 30 hours on one week-long panel from 10 am - 5 pm ET, which will include a three-hour training.**The agency is accepting**[**Expression of Interest**](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMTAsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LnN1cnZleW1vbmtleS5jb20vci84VjdaS1ozIiwiYnVsbGV0aW5faWQiOiIyMDI0MDIwMi44OTU1MzMzMSJ9.VSJ05jbW9fHA4jNChrEIZWo8WC3DOdTSC_Oyc_pA_5Y/s/489364607/br/236454511626-l__;!!NcXZSU8rfchoEksI!Za1S2QugIChifx_RbnT897zeAm8Xg_AOqEy0nYxzWRulqqm4YELyw3M-iJov9XfO5tt9iQBsZ9JWJMYTEfRCUv-65EHN$)**forms from Jan. 8– Feb. 15, 2024.**All reviews will be conducted virtually and there is no compensation for participating. Volunteers must be government associated. participating. Volunteers must be government associated.**For More Information Visit:*** [Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMTEsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LmZlbWEuZ292L2dyYW50cy9taXRpZ2F0aW9uL2J1aWxkaW5nLXJlc2lsaWVudC1pbmZyYXN0cnVjdHVyZS1jb21tdW5pdGllcyIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyNDAyMDIuODk1NTMzMzEifQ.h1J0FUMpZJCbdCjekWh5jKlM6eOWvHzawx3ftIlWZVk/s/489364607/br/236454511626-l__;!!NcXZSU8rfchoEksI!Za1S2QugIChifx_RbnT897zeAm8Xg_AOqEy0nYxzWRulqqm4YELyw3M-iJov9XfO5tt9iQBsZ9JWJMYTEfRCUrCNB0xY$)
* [Expression of Interest](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMTIsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LnN1cnZleW1vbmtleS5jb20vci84VjdaS1ozIiwiYnVsbGV0aW5faWQiOiIyMDI0MDIwMi44OTU1MzMzMSJ9.rTzzUwbIJRmNoxkztbbQLybxtYxlnnZ29q_CQKG7TCM/s/489364607/br/236454511626-l__;!!NcXZSU8rfchoEksI!Za1S2QugIChifx_RbnT897zeAm8Xg_AOqEy0nYxzWRulqqm4YELyw3M-iJov9XfO5tt9iQBsZ9JWJMYTEfRCUg98qYjT$)
* [BRIC qualitative evaluation criteria](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMTMsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LmZlbWEuZ292L3NpdGVzL2RlZmF1bHQvZmlsZXMvZG9jdW1lbnRzL2ZlbWFfaG1hX2JyaWMtcXVhbGl0YXRpdmUtZXZhbHVhdGlvbi1jcml0ZXJpYV8xMDIwMjMucGRmIiwiYnVsbGV0aW5faWQiOiIyMDI0MDIwMi44OTU1MzMzMSJ9.xRh7o_xd0hiDoMMZ-xZR63wwei5MfAGqMh2m8pKTaCQ/s/489364607/br/236454511626-l__;!!NcXZSU8rfchoEksI!Za1S2QugIChifx_RbnT897zeAm8Xg_AOqEy0nYxzWRulqqm4YELyw3M-iJov9XfO5tt9iQBsZ9JWJMYTEfRCUtMmX7Zw$)
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**Weather Corner****Crystal Clear: Unveiling the Mysteries of Ice Crystals*****By Rachel Buvala,  Mitigation Division, FEMA Region 5***It is wintertime and winter means the opportunity to examine ice crystals and snowflakes! Have you ever looked at a snowflake under a microscope? If not, the results may surprise you! Ice crystals (individual snowflakes) are created under unique temperature and moisture conditions in the atmosphere. Due to the molecular structure of ice, all ice crystals start as a hexagon.As the ice crystal travels throughout the atmosphere, it is going to encounter unique environmental conditions that can change its shape. As a result, ice crystals can grow into large planar crystals or elongated columns. The more moisture there is available in the environment, the more intricate the ice crystal will become.Typically, during any snowfall, there are a variety of snowflake shapes and sizes that will fall.Next time it snows, become a cloud physics photographer and take your own ice crystal pictures by using a smartphone!c**How to Examine Ice Crystals:*** Acquire an attachable microscope that can fit over your camera lens. The only other thing you need is a dark-colored flat surface to use as the backdrop for the crystals.
* Make sure that your backdrop has been outside in the cold for a long time otherwise your ice crystals will melt when they fall onto your chosen backdrop.
* Practice focusing your microscope lens before taking pictures of ice crystals.Simply let the ice crystals fall onto your backdrop, focus your lens over the crystals, and you're on your way to becoming a snowflake photographer. Happy photographing!

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