

Wisconsin Emergency Management: Elevates state emergency operations center for March winter storm

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MADISON, Wis. - Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) elevated the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) due to a major winter storm impacting the entire state.

The SEOC was elevated at 9 a.m. Sunday, March 15, to Level 3 which involves expanded monitoring and support. At this level, enhanced monitoring occurs for ongoing or anticipated events, with incident support coordination occurring as needed.

The Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs and other agencies are coordinating with local emergency managers and will provide support when it is requested through the SEOC. Those agencies include:

- Department of Transportation - Wisconsin State Patrol
- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Health Services
- Wisconsin voluntary agencies

Tips to stay safe during a winter storm

For those living or working in the impacted areas, please monitor local or county communication channels for area specific information. This information may be found on websites, social media, local alert systems, or news media.

According to Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), travel is becoming increasingly dangerous, especially in the northwest, north central, and northeast

counties. Travel is not advised in many of those counties; please stay off the roads and stay safe.

Other precautions include:

- Having multiple ways to receive weather alerts, including enabling wireless emergency alerts on your cell phone if available. Wireless emergency alerts are free and resemble text messages that contain weather and/or safety information. These messages are sent by authorized agencies to cellular phones in geographically targeted areas.
 - Check the settings on your mobile device.
 - Older phones may not be capable of receiving WEAs and some phone models require you to enable WEAs.
 - Some mobile service providers call these messages “Government Alerts” or “Emergency Alert Messages.”
- If you are stranded inside a vehicle, stay inside, turn on the hazards, call 911, and move vehicle(s) out of traffic if possible.
- Be prepared for potential power outages.
 - Keep your cell phone charged and if you own a power bank, ensure it is charged as well.
- If you believe a roof collapse is imminent or has already begun due to heavy snow, leave the building immediately and call 911.
 - Warning signs of a roof collapse include roof sagging, cracked walls, bowing ceilings or unusual popping, cracking, or creaking sounds coming from the roof.
 - Treat your evacuation just like you would if there is a fire. Consider designating a meeting place outside of the structure, a safe distance from the building and start to get accountabilities for all the occupants.
- Check on your neighbors. Keep in contact with community members, especially older adults, people with disabilities, and those without access to shelter, to make sure they’re safe.
- Once the storm clears, stay safe going outside. Check your surroundings before starting clean up or traveling. Avoid ice, downed power lines, large tree branches, and other debris. Do not overexert yourself. Know your limits and listen to your body, take breaks, and ask for help when needed.

For updated travel information, follow official WisDOT sources like [511wi.gov](https://www.511wi.gov), WisDOT and Wisconsin State Patrol social media platforms, and official WisDOT travel advisories and [news releases](#).

About Wisconsin Emergency Management

Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) is a division of the Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs. Its mission is to build capabilities and coordinate resources to support a safe and resilient Wisconsin. Through planning, training and exercising WEM prepares themselves, Wisconsinites, and response personnel to minimize the loss of lives and property. It also operates the ReadyWisconsin public safety campaign.