



Antrim and
Newtownabbey
BOROUGH COUNCIL



WINTER WISE

Advice to help our residents keep warm
and well throughout the winter months




**WINTER
WISE**



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KEEP WARM

By keeping warm over the winter months you can help prevent colds, flu or more serious health problems like pneumonia.

Try to heat your main living room to around 21°C and the rest of the house to at least 18°C. Make sure you keep your living room warm throughout the day and heat your bedroom before going to bed. In very cold



weather, set the heating to come on earlier, rather than turning the thermostat up. This means you won't be cold while you wait for your home to heat up.

Never use hot water bottles in the same bed as an electric blanket, even if the blanket is switched off. Make sure your electric blanket is safe and secured tightly onto the bed.

Wear clothes made of wool, cotton or fleecy synthetic fibres and plenty of thin layers rather than one thick layer. Wear bed socks and thermal underwear at night and put on a coat, hat, scarf, gloves and warm shoes or boots when you go outside.

OIL STAMP SAVING SCHEME



Save for your oil heating costs through the Council's Oil Stamp Saving Scheme. Residents can pick up an oil stamp saving card at any of the participating retail outlets and purchase stamps with their weekly shopping, at a cost of £5 each. Stamps are placed on a savings card and then used as payment or part payment for oil at any of the participating oil companies.

A full list of outlets selling stamps and oil suppliers is available at www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/oilstamps

OIL CLUBS

Oil Clubs allow local residents to combine their orders for oil. Orders are placed with a community coordinator and must be placed by a specific date each month. Lower prices are negotiated with oil suppliers by buying larger quantities but all within the club get the same price per litre of oil regardless of the quantity they order.

TOP TIPS

Keep the heat in your home and costs down with insulation. It's a good idea to:

- fit draught-proofing to seal any gaps around windows and doors
- make sure your loft has insulation - any home with 4 inches (100 millimetres) or less should have it topped up
- make sure wall cavities are insulated
- insulate your hot water cylinder and pipes

For more information on oil stamps, oil clubs or keep warm packs, contact Environmental Health:

T. 028 9034 0160

E. envhealth@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk





KEEP SAFE AT HOME

Be aware of the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Carbon monoxide is produced when gas appliances like boilers, built in ovens, freestanding cookers or any appliance such as a boiler, open fire or stove which burns oil or solid fuel (coal, petrol, wood) aren't fully burning their fuel. This usually happens if they have been incorrectly fitted, not properly maintained, or if vents, chimneys or flues become blocked.

The Gas Safe register identifies some tell-tale carbon monoxide signs:

- Yellow or orange cooker flames - gas flames should be crisp and blue
- Soot or yellow-brown staining around or on appliances
- Inconsistent boiler pilot lights which frequently blow out
- More condensation inside windows than usual

TAKE THESE STEPS TO REDUCE THE RISK:

- Install a carbon monoxide detector and test on a weekly basis
- Ensure boilers, stoves and other appliances are properly fitted, regularly (at least annually) checked and serviced by a competent person
- Make sure you have adequate ventilation; don't block or build around any existing air vents or flues
- Make sure all chimneys are regularly swept and kept clear

For help with installation or servicing your appliance contact:

OFTEC (Oil Firing Technical Association)

T. 01473 626 298

Northern Ireland Association of Chimney Sweeps

www.niacs.co.uk

Gas Safe Register

T. 0800 4085 500

For more information on carbon monoxide contact Environmental Health:

T. 028 9034 0160

E. envhealth@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk



KEEP YOUR PETS SAFE

Bad weather affects our pets as it's harder for them to stay warm and more difficult to exercise them.

Look out for pets and keep them safe from flood water. Have a tag on their collar with your name and contact number on it and have them micro chipped.

Naturally different animals will have differing needs. If your pet is kept outside, make sure they have plenty of warm bedding and there is adequate shelter at all times to protect them from the wind and rain. Feeding them sufficiently and regularly will also help to keep them warm. It is also important to ensure they have 24 hour access to water.

Your pet, particularly your dog, will still need exercised. Just a short walk or bouncing a ball around the garden is quite often enough to keep them happy. Some animal toys will also help stimulate them if



they can't get out of the house because of ice and snow.

If you are worried about your pet contact your local vet.

If you are concerned about the welfare of a neighbour's pet contact the Animal Welfare Officer

T. 028 2563 3134

E. animal.welfare@midandeastantrim.gov.uk



FROZEN PIPES

Water pipes freezing in the winter are dangerous and can be expensive to fix or replace.

AVOIDING FROZEN PIPES:

- You should insulate water tanks and pipes in areas such as lofts, roof spaces, garages and outbuildings. Don't forget about non domestic premises and holiday homes which may be unoccupied and/or unheated for prolonged periods of time
 - Lagging material for insulating pipes can be purchased from DIY or plumbing stores. Be aware that even with lagging, extreme weather conditions can still result in water within pipes freezing. However, without lagging, the potential for this to happen is greatly increased
 - Have dripping taps repaired - it only takes a small drip of water to freeze leaving the pipe completely blocked
 - Know where to find the internal stop tap/valve for water in your property. It is usually (but not always) located under your kitchen sink and normally closes by turning clockwise. It is advisable to test that it is working in preparation for cold winter weather
 - Leave the heating on a low level setting if you are away during colder weather periods. Leave a key with a neighbour, friend or family member who can check the house regularly
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- If a property is not in use or unoccupied for a prolonged period of time, it is advisable to turn the water supply off at the stop valve/tap to reduce the risk of burst pipes going undetected, potentially resulting in property damage

Stop valve tags are available free to customers via NI Water

T. 03457 440088 E. waterline@niwater.com

IF YOU HAVE A FROZEN PIPE:

- Turn off your water supply at the stop tap/valve
- Thaw along the pipe starting from the end nearest the tap
- Don't use a blow lamp or naked flame
- Put hot water bottles or a thick cloth soaked in hot water over the frozen pipe or use a hair dryer at the lowest setting to thaw pipes - be careful not to warm pipes too quickly
- Don't leave taps dripping or running; the water may not flush down the plug hole if the pipes below are frozen

IF A PIPE BURSTS:

- Turn off stop tap/valve
- Try to block escaping water with thick cloth like towels

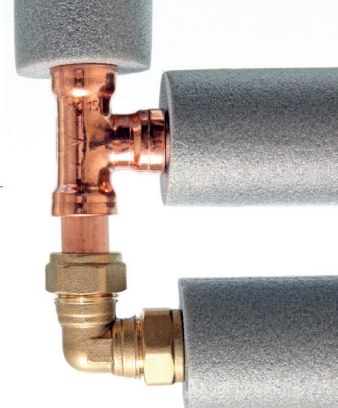
- Turn on all taps to reduce flooding
- Call a qualified plumber
- Don't forget to turn taps off once problem is fixed to avoid further flooding

TOP TIPS FOR PROPERTIES INCLUDE:

- Consider a contingency plan for what you would do if you did lose your water supply for a prolonged period of time
- Have the number of a plumber who knows where your property is and who is prepared to attend at night if needed
- Make sure you have adequate insurance to cover your property in the event of a burst pipe

For more information visit:

www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/extremeweather





FLOODING

There is a heightened risk of flooding during winter as rainfall increases and snow and ice melt.

It is your responsibility to protect yourself, your property and to minimise damage. There are a number of steps which can be taken:

- Think about your escape route - particularly if you live in a bungalow. Consider accessibility to escape windows and location of keys if windows are locked
 - Move valuable possessions and electrical items to a safe place i.e. an area where water can't reach them, such as upstairs
 - Shut off gas and electricity at the mains point
 - Look out for pets and animals to keep them safe from flood water. Have animals tagged or collared with information which will allow identification of the owner's contact name and number
 - Prevent access of water by using sandbags at entry points to the property, including outhouses and garages (If sandbags aren't available, sacks or pillowcases filled with sand or soil can be used as an alternative)
 - Don't forget about outside - move your car and garden furniture to higher ground or a safe place. Protect chemicals/fuel stored in garages or outhouses so they don't spill into floodwater. Secure your oil tank to ensure it does not drip into floodwater. Finally make sure you unplug any exterior electrical appliances
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SANDBAGS

It is your responsibility to protect your own property and home owners are encouraged to take proactive measures to defend their property from the risk of flooding. Sandbags can be purchased from DIY home stores and are an affordable way of protecting your property. When the Council is alerted to the possibility of an increased risk of flooding, sandbags are available at a number of sites throughout the Borough. These are available at the locations below for the public to collect on a self-help basis to protect their properties.

- Ballyearl Leisure Centre, Doagh Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 5BU
- Castle Mall Carpark, Antrim, BT41 4DN
- Crumlin Leisure Centre, Main Street, Crumlin, BT29 4UP
- Environmental Services Depot, Orchard Way, Antrim, BT41 2RU
- Mossley Mill, Carnmoney Road North, Newtownabbey, BT36 5QA (outside of office hours, contact on-site security for assistance)
- Neillsbrook Community Centre, Neillsbrook Road, Randalstown, BT41 3AE
- The Square Carpark, Ballyclare, BT39 9BB
- Toome House, Main Street, Toomebridge, BT41 3TF
- Valley Leisure Centre, Church Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 7LJ
- Whiteabbey Village Carpark, Whiteabbey Village, BT37 0SN

If you are affected by flooding, contact Flood Incident Line T. 0300 2000 100. This number is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to report flooding. When you report a flooding incident, staff will know which agency needs to respond and contact them. This is a non-emergency number. If you are in danger, contact the emergency services T. 999

AFTER THE FLOOD EVENT

Following a flood event, caution should be exercised with particular risk surrounding structural stability and also health hazards.

- Assume that all power lines are live. Check that electrical power in the property is switched off before you do anything. Get a qualified electrician to check appliances which have come into contact with floodwater. Check for the smell of gas and make sure the mains source is switched off
- Look at the ceiling for cracks, bulges or wet plaster which can be a threat to the structure and building stability. Do not enter a property with large amounts of sediment which may indicate instability
- Avoid standing in water as there is a risk that it may be contaminated. Contaminated water can pose a hazard to health and may be a breeding ground for micro-organisms
- Wear protective clothing when cleaning and ensure open wounds are covered. Floodwater can be contaminated with sewage, chemicals and animal waste. Anything that has been in contact with floodwater will need to be disinfected, including your hands
- Make your insurance company aware of the event. The Council can help with the disposal of flood damaged items, T. 028 9034 0056

For more information visit www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/extremeweather. A template Household Flood Plan is available for you to complete and keep somewhere safe in the event of flooding. Alternatively contact the Council for a hard copy T. 028 9034 0000 or T. 028 9446 3113



KEEP HEALTHY & ACTIVE

Keeping yourself healthy and well in winter is really important.

FLU JAB

Check you have had your flu jab if you are aged 65 or over, pregnant, have certain medical conditions, live in a residential or nursing home or are the main carer for an older or disabled person.

The website www.nhs.uk gives great health advice on winter ailments including flu, winter vomiting and cold temperatures.

EAT WELL

It is also important to make sure you eat well during winter. Hot meals and drinks help keep you warm, so drink plenty of tea, coffee and hot chocolate and make sure you eat at least one hot meal each day.

If you can, try and make sure you have your five portions of fruit and vegetables a day as this will give you the right nutrients and vitamins to fight those winter bugs.

BEAT THE BLUES

With dark long days and bad weather, it's very easy to sit in the house and not get out and about. This can have an impact on your mental health so it's important to find ways to beat the winter blues.

Sunlight helps improve your mood so when the weather is good go for a walk or sit near natural light. Spend time planning things to do in the summer months so that you have something to look forward to.

If you feel completely overwhelmed contact Lifeline:

T. 0808 808 8000

Keeping active in the winter months is great for both the mind and body.

Physical activity has been shown to reduce the risk of general ill health, heart disease, some cancers, stroke and mental health problems. It's difficult to get out and about when the weather isn't good and the days are short, but there are lots of options to help get you motivated.

OUTDOOR GYMS

In the better winter weather, wrap up warm and enjoy a brisk walk along one of the many walking routes around the Borough. To complement your walk, outdoor gyms are available at various locations across the Borough, bringing a new dimension to outdoor activity. Suitable for all fitness levels, these pieces of gym equipment are specifically designed for outdoor use and are completely free to use.

There are currently seven outdoor gyms within the Borough:

- Hazelbank Park, Newtownabbey
- Loughshore Park, Newtownabbey
- Neillsbrook Community Centre, Randalstown
- Six Mile Water Path - Antrim Forum to Lough Shore Park, Antrim
- Sixmilewater River Path, Ballyclare
- Toome Linear Park, Toomebridge
- Wallace Park, Templepatrick

LEISURE CENTRES

If you prefer to be indoors, why not join one of our clubs or classes? There is something for everyone at our five leisure centres:

- Antrim Forum, Antrim
- Ballyearl Leisure Centre, Newtownabbey
- Crumlin Leisure Centre, Crumlin
- Sixmile Leisure Centre, Ballyclare
- Valley Leisure Centre, Newtownabbey

OVER 50s

We also have clubs specifically for over 50s. The clubs offer not only a variety of different exercises, but an opportunity to socialise over a coffee afterwards. It's easy to lock yourself away over the winter period, however a club like this can help prevent isolation and both the exercise and the company will help improve your mental health.

For more information on activities in your area both outdoors and indoors:

Check out our Borough Life magazine or visit www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/leisure





KEEP SAFE ON THE ROADS

It's a good idea to have your vehicle fully serviced before winter sets in.

Make sure all lights are clean and working, the battery is fully charged, brakes are working well, the windscreen and windows are clean and the washer filled with screenwash. Check and top up anti-freeze and oil if needed and stock up on de-icer for car windows.

Have your tyres checked (including the spare) to ensure they are all in good condition and at the legal tread depth and pressure. If they don't have the legal tread it will seriously affect your car's traction, steering and ability to stop.

It may be best to avoid long trips during icy conditions, but we know on some occasions, driving during freezing conditions can't be avoided. Here are some tips to help you reach your destination safely:

- Plan your journey
 - To improve visibility, before you set off make sure your windscreen and roof are completely clear of snow
 - When going on a longer journey, make sure you bring food, hot drinks, warm blankets and a fully charged mobile phone
 - Slow down! Stay well back from the vehicle in front. In wet weather stopping distances are at least double than that required on dry roads. On snow, stopping distances can be ten times greater than on dry roads
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- Drive with care, even on treated roads
- Brake gently to avoid skidding. If your wheels start to lock, ease off the brakes

IF YOU GET STUCK IN SNOW:

- Do not spin your wheels - this will only dig you in deeper. Turn your wheels from side to side a few times to push the snow out of the way
- Use a light touch on the accelerator to ease your car out
- Use a shovel to clear snow from the wheels and underside of your car
- Pour sand, gravel or salt in the path of the wheels or even one of your foot mats to get traction and grip

If you have to leave your vehicle, arrange to collect it at the earliest and safest opportunity. If there is any risk of your car causing an obstruction, let the police know where it has been left.



GRITTING & SNOW CLEARANCE

TransportNI (formerly Road Service) are responsible for the gritting and salting of roads all across Northern Ireland. However recently Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council have entered into a partnership with TransportNI to assist with the removal of snow and ice in certain priority areas which comprise mainly of town centre footways and pedestrian areas across the Borough. For further information on routes and schedules contact TransportNI T. 0300 200 7891

WINTER PACKS

Winter packs comprising of snow shovels, ice grippers, high visibility vests and gloves are available from Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council for local communities to help clear their areas of snow in a prolonged snow event. The packs are available free of charge and the name of the individual or group who receives them would be shared with the community. If a pack is required during a prolonged snow event:

T. 028 9446 3113 (Antrim)

T. 028 9034 0000 (Newtownabbey)

E. info@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk



PREPARE A GRAB BAG

Prepare an emergency grab bag containing everything you might need in an emergency should the situation arise where you need to leave your home.

The following items may be useful to keep in the grab bag:

- Prescription medicines
- Toiletries
- Bottled water and non-perishable food items (ready to eat food i.e. tinned with a can opener)
- Small amount of cash
- Spare house and car keys
- Mobile phone
- List of important numbers - family and friends, Flood Line, Northern Health and Social Care Trust, GP, PSNI, the Council, insurance company, local maintenance contacts
- Copies of important documentation - insurance information and birth certificates or ID
- Chargers or spare batteries
- Wind-up or battery powered torch and radio (with spare batteries)
- First Aid kit
- Warm and waterproof clothes, boots, gloves and blankets

DURING AN EMERGENCY EVENT

If it's possible, check on family, friends and neighbours, especially the elderly and keep in contact with others but don't put yourself in any danger. Keep up to date by listening to a local radio station or TV channel and wait for official updates.



HELPING THE ELDERLY

The elderly are particularly vulnerable during periods of cold weather. If you have an elderly parent, relative or neighbour, you can help them avoid injury. You could offer to go to the shops for them or grit their garden path.

USEFUL CONTACTS

ADVICE

Citizens Advice Antrim and Newtownabbey

T. 028 9590 6505

Make the Call – Department for Communities Benefit & Support Services

T. 0800 232 1271

ANIMAL WELFARE

Animal Welfare Officer

T. 028 2563 3134

COUNCIL

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

T. 028 9446 3113

T. 028 9034 0000

www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Northern Ireland Ambulance Service

T. 028 9040 0999

Emergency: 999

www.niamb.co.uk

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service

T. 028 9266 4221

Emergency: 999

www.nifrs.org

Police Service of Northern Ireland

T. 101

Emergency: 999

www.psn.org.uk

FLOODING

Flood Incident Line

T. 0300 2000 100

HEALTH

Antrim Area Hospital

T. 028 9442 4000

Daldriada Urgent Care

T. 028 2566 3500

Lifeline

T. 0808 808 8000

HOUSING

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

T. 03448 920900 (Office hours)

T. 03448 920901 (Emergencies)

POWER & ENERGY

NIE Networks Ltd - to report a fault

T. 03457 643 643

E. customercontact@nienetworks.co.uk

www.nienetworks.co.uk

NI Gas Emergency Service

T. 0800 002 001

Budget Energy Ltd

T. 0800 012 1177

E. TalkToUs@budgetenergy.co.uk

www.budgetenergy.co.uk

Click Energy

T. 0800 107 0732

E. chat@clickenergyni.com

www.clickenergyni.com



antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/winterwise



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 Civic Centre, Antrim

 028 9446 3113

 Mossley Mill, Newtownabbey

 028 9034 0000