



# COUNTY OF ORANGE – HEALTH CARE AGENCY

# PRESS RELEASE

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## COLD TEMPERATURE ADVISORY ISSUED FOR INLAND AND COASTAL ORANGE COUNTY CITIES

**(Santa Ana, California)** – The National Weather Service (NWS) has forecasted cold overnight temperatures throughout inland and coastal Orange County cities beginning Monday, December 12 through Friday, December 16. Overnight temperatures in some areas will dip to the low 40s. Colder-than-normal temperatures increase the risk of cold-related illnesses like hypothermia, especially for those who are more sensitive to extreme weather changes.

When exposed to cold temperatures, your body begins to lose heat faster than it can be produced. Low body temperature may make you unable to think clearly or move well. Hypothermia occurs most likely at very cold temperatures, but it can occur even at cool temperatures (above 40°F) if a person becomes chilled from rain, sweat, or submersion in cold water.

“When prolonged exposure to very cold temperatures occurs, it is important to make certain that you are protected from hypothermia. In addition, it is critical to check that seniors who live alone, your neighbors, pets and vulnerable populations are safe during this time,” said **Dr. Regina Chinsio-Kwong**, County Health Officer and OC Health Care Agency Chief Medical Officer.

Residents are also cautioned against using their kitchen range or oven to heat their homes. Home furnaces and heaters should be inspected periodically, with needed repairs performed by a qualified and licensed heating or plumbing contractor. If space heaters are used, make sure there is nothing within three feet of the heater that could catch on fire, such as bedding, drapes, or furniture. Never cover your space heater and never leave children unattended near a space heater. If electric power is lost during a storm, never use a gasoline powered generator indoors, in a garage or near doors or windows where air may enter a home due to the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that at high levels of exposure can be fatal. Low levels of carbon monoxide poisoning can be confused with flu symptoms, food poisoning or other illnesses and can have a long-term health risk if left unattended. Some of the symptoms of low-level exposure include shortness of breath, mild nausea and mild headaches. Moderate levels of carbon monoxide exposure can present with headaches, dizziness, nausea, and lightheadedness. Every home should have a carbon monoxide detector, which is very similar to a smoke detector.

Recommended precautions to prepare your household for cold weather or power outage:

- Check on those who are at high risk to make sure they are staying warm – including seniors who live alone, as well as other vulnerable populations such as young children
- Make sure to check on your pets.
- Wear layers of clothing.

For more information on cold weather safety, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/index.html>.

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