

House Republican Press Release

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REP. GIEGLER APPLAUDS GOVERNOR RELL FOR DIRECTING AGENCIES TO ENSURE ADEQUATE SHELTER SPACE IN FRIGID WEATHER



Emergency preparedness plan also includes conference call with municipalities, Red Cross

Governor M. Jodi Rell announced today she has directed state agencies to work closely with municipalities and community providers to ensure there is adequate shelter space and priority given to emergency heating oil deliveries during the potentially dangerous frigid temperatures forecast for the state later this week.

Rep. Giegler said, "I am pleased that Governor Rell has taken precautionary steps to help those citizens who may be literally "out in the cold" especially during the frigid days expected over the next week. The Governor said it was a matter of "public safety". It's also the right thing to do. We have the shelters and the ability to help these people; it's fundamental that we do so."

"The freezing weather headed our way poses an extreme danger to the homeless and others who depend on vital social services," Governor Rell said. "We need to take precautions now to safeguard vulnerable citizens and that includes safe, warm shelter and beds and sufficient fuel to warm their homes. This is more than just being warm and comfortable on a cold winter night. It is a matter of public safety."

With temperatures expected to linger in the single digits and teens by week's end, Governor Rell is holding a conference call Tuesday with the state departments of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, Public Safety and Social Services as well as municipal leaders and the Red Cross to identify existing shelters and overflow space.

She is encouraging municipalities to open up local emergency shelters in advance of the cold weather and is directing emergency management officials to work towns and cities to provide any additional help if necessary. The Governor also has directed the Connecticut National Guard to have 10 armories ready for use as shelters if needed.

Under the Governor's direction, the DSS will immediately canvass its 45 state-funded shelters to ensure they have adequately planned for any increase in clients and can refer those they cannot accommodate to shelters that can.

“I am also requiring the Department of Social Service to notify all community action centers to make sure those residents who need an emergency delivery of fuel oil get it first and get it fast this weekend,” Governor Rell said.

A list of open shelters and heating oil assistance programs are available by calling the free information line 2-1-1.

“We should not forget anyone this week. I am urging all Connecticut citizens to check on the welfare of their elderly neighbors, family members and others who may need help,” the Governor said.

(Cold weather safety tips attached)

Cold Weather Safety

- Wear several layers of not too tight or too bulky clothing. Always wear a hat and gloves.
- Consume hot and easily digestible food and beverages with higher calories, like hot milk, soup, noodles and rice.

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- Remain indoors or in places with sunlight. Continue with usual daily activities, but do more exercise to generate heat, improve blood circulation, and maintain flexibility of joints.
- Exercise care and concern for the elderly. If you happen to know of a single elder living alone or with chronic illnesses, give him/her a call or pay a visit.

Heating Safety

- Do not burn anything larger than candles inside your home without providing good ventilation to the outside.
- Any type of heater (except electric) should be vented.
- Do not use a gas or electric oven or surface units for heating.
- Do not burn outdoor barbecue materials such as charcoal briquettes inside— even in a fireplace.
- Do not use bottled gas in natural gas appliances unless appliances have been converted for that use
- Use battery-operated smoke and carbon monoxide detectors