



## Winter Weather: Considerations For the Cold Outdoors



Winter temperatures in the Midwest can get to be frigid cold and often kids and teens are not aware of the dangers that can be present during the cold weather seasons. Here are some considerations to keep families safe during this season of the year.

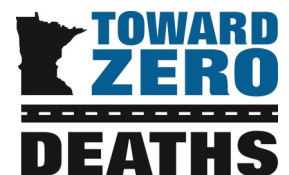
**Carbon Monoxide (CO):** Carbon monoxide is a colorless and odorless gas. The only way you will know for sure if the home or other environment you are in has high CO levels is by having an alarm. The signs and symptoms of CO poisoning are similar to the flu (headache, tiredness, nausea and vomiting to name a few) and so often people go to bed thinking they are just “under the weather”. Without an alarm to alert them, they often die in their sleep.

- ⇒ Be sure that your home has an alarm on every level and that it has functioning batteries. Test it often and replace the batteries / alarm when needed so you always have a working alarm to rely on.
- ⇒ Never start your car and run it in the garage if it is attached to your home. Even with the garage doors open, the CO from the car can get into the home and cause high CO levels.

**Winter Pedestrian Dangers:** When out walking in the wintertime, it is often hard to see people if their clothing is too light colored or all dark if you are in low light conditions. Assure that you have something reflective on when going out in the early morning before the sun comes up or when walking after sundown in the wintertime. Safe Kids Grand Forks has reflective zipper pulls that we distribute for FREE and they can be put on a jacket zipper or backpack for added visibility. Also watch for on-coming traffic when coming to street corners that may be piled high with snow. This is especially important for young students that may be too short to be seen behind a snowbank. Have them take extra caution to look for traffic in both directions and assure that the drivers see them and can stop on slippery streets.

**Assure Good Window Visibility:** For teen drivers that may relish “sleeping in” and not leaving them much time to get to class, assure that they understand the importance of having windows that are clear of ice and snow. Reduced visibility can lead to blocked vision for on-coming traffic. Assure that they leave themselves enough time to clear their windows and that they have a working ice scraper in their car. And, always BUCKLE UP, slow down on ice and snow and remember that stopping always takes longer on road conditions that are wet, slippery and snow covered.

This message is shared by Safe Kids Grand Forks and our partners with  
Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths.



Altru Health System is proud to serve as the lead agency for Safe Kids Grand Forks.  
For more information on this and other childhood injury prevention topics, visit [safekidsgf.com](http://safekidsgf.com), call us at 701.780.1489 or email [safekids@altru.org](mailto:safekids@altru.org).

