

The New Jersey Poison Information & Education System — Serving New Jersey Since 1983

MEDIA ALERT

Media Contacts:

800-222-1222 (800-962-1253 outside NJ)

Don't Be a Statistic During Severe Weather Conditions - Poisoning Exposures are Common but Preventable -

Diane P. Calello, MD, Executive and Medical Director
Bruce Ruck, Pharm.D., Director, Drug Information and Professional Education
New Jersey Poison Information and Education System (NJPIES)

Available for Interviews

BREAKING NEWS: New Jersey residents will “weather” a fierce storm come tomorrow, bringing with it snow, power outages and even flooding. The state is expecting unusually high snow totals, which mean dangerous even deadly travel conditions lay ahead. When storms of this magnitude occur, it is common to see an uptick in poisoning exposures/injuries. The good news: These exposures are PREVENTABLE!

“Storms like what’s expected for tomorrow are known to result in illness and even deaths from hypothermia and carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning, as well as exposures to a variety of substances,” says Diane P. Calello, MD, executive and medical director of the NJ Poison Center. “Rest assure that we will weather the storm alongside you tomorrow, responding to your calls for help, 24/7.” You can reach the poison experts in the following ways: call 1-800-222-1222, chat via www.njpies.org, or text 8002221222@njpies.org.

Below you will find key safety tips that may potentially save your life or the life of a loved one. For those who have social media, follow the NJ Poison Center on [FB](#) and [Twitter](#) for storm safety tips.

General Safety Tips:

1. Save the Poison Help line (1-800-222-1222) in your cell phone and post it somewhere visible in your home.
2. Stay home and off the roads if possible. Driving conditions in severe weather deteriorate quickly.
3. Have a flashlight with new batteries ready to use
 - Make sure to use a flashlight when giving or taking medication. Read all labels carefully.
4. Have a battery-operated radio available with new batteries.
5. Rock salt exposures occur frequently during severe weather. Children and pets can easily access rock salt left in garages, outside, hallways, etc. Keep these products locked up and out of sight and reach.
6. Avoid drinking alcohol in cold temperatures
7. Infants, children, and the elderly are at greatest risk for hypothermia. Stay warm and dress appropriately.
 - Some medications may increase your risk for hypothermia. Check with your doctor, pharmacist or call the NJ Poison Experts.

Safety Tips to Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning During Severe Weather:

1. Check the batteries in your smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector. If you don't have either detector, install before the bad weather hits.
2. DO NOT bring portable gas powered generator into the home or garage –
 - Do not place them outside near any open windows/doors
 - They should be at least 25 feet from any house.
3. DO NOT bring other gas powered equipment, propane stoves, propane lights, or kerosene camping stoves

into the house or garage.

4. DO NOT heat your home with your stove.
5. DO NOT cook with charcoal indoors.
6. DO NOT idle a car in a closed garage. Once you pull in, immediately turn off the engine.
7. Keep your home well ventilated. If need be, keep a window slightly cracked to allow airflow.
8. Clear snow accumulation from the clothes dryer, heating vents and car exhaust pipes before turning on.
9. During the cleanup, DO NOT USE gas powered cleaning equipment indoors.

If you suspect Carbon Monoxide Poisoning, Take Immediate Action:

1. If a loved one is unconscious or unresponsive, get out them out of the house and call 911 immediately.
2. Exit the house/building immediately. Do not waste time opening windows to "air" it out; this will delay your escape and cause you to breathe in even more dangerous fumes.
3. Contact your local fire department/energy provider.
4. Call the NJ Poison Experts, 1-800-222-1222, for immediate treatment advice. Do not waste time looking for information on the internet about carbon monoxide poisoning. Call us for fast, free and accurate information.

Safety Tips to Prevent Food Spoilage during a Power Outage:

1. In preparing for a power outage, make the temperature colder than usual on both freezers and refrigerators. This will prolong the cold after a power outage.
2. During a power outage, keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed and open them only when necessary.
3. Place a refrigerator thermometer in the center of the middle shelf and check the temperature. If it has risen to 40 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, discard any potentially spoiled foods. Such foods include meat, poultry, fish, dairy and egg products, soft cheese, cooked beans, cooked rice, cooked potatoes, cooked pasta, potato salad, custard and pudding.
4. Fill freezers to capacity, but refrigerators need room for air to circulate.
5. When the power is restored, allow time for the refrigerator to reach below 40 degrees Fahrenheit before restocking.
6. When in doubt, throw it out!

Remember, help is always available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year, even during bouts of Mother Nature. Call 800-222-1222 to speak with a NJ Poison Expert. Help is available in more than 150 languages. Calls are free and confidential. Program the Poison Help line (800-222-1222) into your cell phone and post it somewhere visible in your home.

Help is Just a Phone Call Away!

We are social. Join us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/njpies) and Twitter (@NJPoisonCenter) for breaking news, safety tips, trivia questions, etc.

Real People. Real Answers.

About NJPIES

As New Jersey's only poison control center, the New Jersey Poison Information & Education System provides information on poison prevention and treatments. Chartered in 1983, NJPIES provides free consultation through telephone hot line services and the Web. Medical professionals such as physicians, registered nurses and pharmacists offer confidential advice regarding poison emergencies and provide information on poison prevention, drugs, food poisoning, animal bites and more. These specialists are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

NJPIES coordinates state poison education and research and is designated as the regional poison center by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services and the American Association of Poison Control Centers. It tracks incidences of adverse reactions to food, drugs and vaccines in order to monitor potential public health issues and provide data to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A division of the Department of Emergency Medicine of the New Jersey Medical School of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. NJPIES has a state-of-the-art center located on the school's Newark campus. NJPIES is funded, in part, by the NJ Department of Health and the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

New Jersey residents seeking immediate information about treating poison emergencies, and those with any drug information questions, should call the toll-free hot line, **800-222-1222**, any time.

About Rutgers

Established in 1766, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, is America's eighth oldest institution of higher learning and one of the nation's premier public research universities. Serving more than 65,000 students on campuses, centers, institutes and other locations throughout the state, Rutgers is the only public university in New Jersey that is a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities.

Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS) is the health care education, research, and clinical division of Rutgers University, comprising nine schools and their attendant faculty practices, centers, institutes and clinics; New Jersey's leading comprehensive cancer care center; and New Jersey's largest behavioral health care network.

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