

PLUMAS COUNTY ACCESS & FUNCTIONAL NEEDS NEWSLETTER



A subcommittee of the Tri-Health Care Coalition



SAFETY TIPS FOR COLD WEATHER

Winter is coming soon. The beauty of a winter wonderland also means cold weather, snow, and ice. The following safety tips will help you have a safe and injury-free winter:



- Put your best foot forward. Wear proper footwear with good traction when outdoors.
- Clear the way. Spread road salt, sand, or kitty litter on sidewalks and driveways.
- Don't do too much. If public sidewalks haven't been cleared, ask friends or neighbors for help with grocery shopping and other errands.
- Dress for the weather. Cold temperatures are a serious threat to seniors. When heading outdoors, wear a warm coat or jacket over other layers of clothing as well as a hat, gloves and scarf.
- Stay warm inside. Keep houses heated to above 65 degrees F and dress in layers to maintain body heat. Those who have need help paying the heating bill should contact their heating supplier for ways to continue service through the winter.
- Have a plan for heat in case the power goes out. Extra blankets, sleeping bags, and warm winter coats. Fireplace with dry wood.
- Watch out for a silent killer. If you have a fireplace, gas furnace or gas-powered heater, install carbon monoxide detectors in your home.
- Stay in touch. Make an effort to socialize with family, friends and neighbors. It'll help keep your spirits up and let your loved ones know who you're doing. If you can't visit in person, have a telephone chat.

STAYING WARM IN THE WINTER

Fireplaces and other heating sources are commonly used to heat indoor spaces, but it's important to remember that if these tools are not properly vented, cleaned, and used, they can leak dangerous amounts of carbon monoxide - a deadly gas that you can't see or smell. Other items, such as candles and space heaters, can be fire hazards.

Here are some ways to heat your home safely this winter:

- When using a kerosene stove, open a window (just a crack will do)
- Make sure space heaters are at least 3 feet away from flammable items
- Never heat your home using a gas stove, charcoal grill, or other stove not made for home heating
- Call an inspector to have your chimneys and flues inspected (annually)



SPOTLIGHT: CHARLES SCHRAMMEL

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



Meet the newly appointed chair of the Access and Functional Needs (AFN) Committee, Charles Schrammel. Charles joined Plumas County Public Health Agency in December 2023 as the Emergency Preparedness Coordinator. Charles comes from a social service, communications, and emergency service background. In addition to his role at Plumas County Public Health, Charles is an EMT and volunteer firefighter with Indian Valley Fire.

Charles looks forward to continuing the strong work done to strengthen the capability of Plumas County Public Health through agency relationships and community coalitions. His responsibilities include supporting the emergency preparedness of area hospitals, designing and implementing training, exercises, and drills, and coordinating program activities with County departments.

Charles serves as secretary of the Emergency Medical Care Committee, coordinator of the Plumas, Lassen, and Sierra Counties Health Care Coalition, and chair of the Access and Functional Needs Committee.

Welcome Charles!

Keep Food Safe After a Power Outage

Steps to take during a power outage

Food Safety

- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed.
- If the doors stay closed, food will stay safe up to: 4 hours in a refrigerator, 48 hours in a full freezer, 24 hours in a half-full freezer.
- If the power has been out for 4 hours, and a cooler and ice are available, put refrigerated perishable foods in the cooler.



To keep them at 40°F or below, add ice or a cold source like frozen gel packs.

Steps to take after a power outage

- Never taste food to know if it is safe to eat. When in doubt, throw it out.
- Throw out perishable food in your refrigerator (meat, fish, cut fruits and vegetables, eggs, milk, and leftovers) after 4 hours without power or without a cold source like ice. Throw out any food with an unusual smell, color, or texture.
- If you have an appliance thermometer in your refrigerator, check to see if it is still at 40 °F or below.
- Check temperatures of food kept in coolers or your refrigerator with an added cold source. Throw out food that has thawed or is above 40°.
- You can safely refreeze or cook thawed frozen food that still contains ice crystals or is at 40 °F or below.
- Check this [FoodSafety.gov chart](https://www.foodsafety.gov/food-safety-chart) for a list of what foods you should throw out and foods you can refreeze.

Plumas County Community Development Commission (530) 283-2466 • (800) 993-5399

PCCDC www.plumascdc.org

Home Energy Assistance (HEAP) Services

Eligible households can receive a payment for wood, propane, fuel oil, or electricity expenses made to directly to the utility company or vendor.

Weatherization Services (WX)

Eligible households (owners and renters) can receive energy efficiency improvements installed at no cost, such as weather-stripping, insulation, storm windows, compact fluorescent light bulbs, and other energy-related home repairs.