FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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News Release

WINTER WEATHER AWARENESS DAY IN TEXAS – WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14TH

The National Weather Service (NWS) and the Texas Division of Emergency Management have designated November 14th, 2012, as Winter Weather Awareness Day in Texas. This is an annual safety campaign designed to promote winter weather awareness and safety.

Every year, West Texas is affected by winter weather, with at least one winter storm impacting the area in a typical year. Across the United States, an average of 23 fatalities can be attributed each year to winter weather, and dozens of fatalities can be attributed to exposure to cold. Add to that number, vehicle accidents and fatalities, fires due to dangerous use of heaters, and other winter weather fatalities, and you have a significant threat.

The keys to avoiding serious injury or death during a major winter storm include knowing the safety rules to survive cold weather, knowing how to stay informed of forecasts and warnings for winter storm conditions, and preparing ahead of time to handle difficult travel conditions and other exposure to harsh cold weather conditions.

We at the Lubbock National Weather Service Office are prepared to support your winter weather preparedness activities. See our local Winter Weather Awareness Day page at http://www.srh.noaa.gov/lub/?n=wwad-top

See below for a list of winter weather talking points, and other web links that may help with your story ideas.

If you would be interested in creating a story to support this winter weather awareness campaign, feel free to contact the Lubbock Warning Coordination Meteorologist, Jody James, to set up an interview or request assistance.

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Winter Weather Talking Points

- Heavy snow can immobilize a region and paralyze a city - stranding commuters, closing airports, stopping the flow of supplies, and disrupting emergency and medical services. Accumulations of snow can cause roofs to collapse and knock down trees and power lines.

- Exposure to cold can cause frostbite or hypothermia and become life-threatening. Infants and elderly people are most susceptible. What constitutes extreme cold varies in different parts of the country.

- Frostbite is damage to body tissue caused by extreme cold. A wind chill of -20° Fahrenheit (F) will cause frostbite in just 30 minutes.

- Heavy accumulations of ice can bring down trees and topple utility poles and communication towers. Ice can disrupt communications and power for days while utility companies repair extensive damage. Even small accumulations of ice can be extremely dangerous to motorists and pedestrians. Bridges and overpasses are particularly dangerous because they freeze before other surfaces.

- At home, primary concerns are loss of heat, power, and telephone service, and a shortage of supplies if storm conditions continue for more than a day. While traveling, motorists could become stranded, and be susceptible to extreme cold.

- NOAA Weather Radio is the best means to receive winter weather warnings, and all types of critical weather information from the National Weather Service. The National Weather Service continuously broadcasts warnings and forecasts that can be received by NOAA Weather Radios, which are sold in many stores. The average range of reception is 40 miles, depending on topography. Citizens should purchase a radio that has a battery back-up and a Specific Area Message Encoder feature, which automatically alerts the listener when a watch or warning is issued for a particular county.

Winter Weather Web Links

**Winter 2012-2013 Temperature and Precipitation Outlook**

Information from the Lubbock, TX NOAA National Weather Service Office:
http://www.weather.gov/lubbock

Detailed safety information concerning winter weather and winter weather preparedness:
http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/winter/

Winter Weather Tip Sheet
Winter Weather Terms
Winter Weather Outlooks

Winter Storms - The Deceptive Killers (pdf document)
State of Texas Road Conditions

Texas DPS Winter Storm Preparedness

Nationwide information from NOAA’s National Weather Service:
http://www.weather.gov

Thank you for your support of Winter Weather Awareness Day.