

Limitation of Risk from Blizzards and Snowstorms

Every year, extremely low atmospheric pressure brings blizzards to many parts of Hokkaido. Unlike disasters caused by torrential rain, there is seldom any need for evacuation, but attention to the following points will help make your home safer.

– To make your home a safer place –

- Take note of weather reports and, when blizzards are forecast, avoid going outside.
- Prepare a flashlight and portable radio in case of power cuts.
- Maintain stocks of food and drinking water in case you cannot go out.
- In the case of forced draught balanced flue-type (FF) heaters, ensure the area around the exhaust flue is clear of snow.



If it is necessary to go out during times of snowstorms and the like, try to use public transportation. If the use of a private vehicle is unavoidable, poor visibility and snowdrifts may also occur, so please pay attention to the following points.

– When the use of a private vehicle is unavoidable –

- Road traffic information can be obtained via your mobile phone (*1) but, as some regions are blind spots for coverage, do not rely too heavily on your mobile phone and always drive safely according to the road conditions.

*1. Northern Road Navi (<http://n-rd.jp/>), Road Traffic Information Center (Tel. 0570-011011) or mobile speed dial #8011)

- During the winter, weather conditions may change drastically according to the region, resulting in vehicles being stranded. Always keep warm clothing, rubber boots, gloves, a shovel and a towing rope in the vehicle and make sure you have sufficient fuel in the tank. In addition, the preparation of drinking water and emergency food provisions will also provide peace of mind in case of emergencies

- If you sense that driving is dangerous due to drifting snow or the like, stop the car and wait at a Michinoeki roadside station, gas station or convenience store until conditions improve.



– If your vehicle becomes stranded in a snowstorm –

- If your vehicle becomes stranded in a heavy snowfall or snow drift, call the emergency road-side assistance or JAF road service (*2), or ask for help at a nearby house. Make sure the vehicle is conspicuous by turning on the hazard lamps or placing emergency breakdown signs nearby.

*2. Emergency roadside assistance (#9910), JAF road service (speed dial #8139)

- If there is nowhere to shelter or request help nearby, contact the emergency services (119) or police (110) and shelter in the car. Occasionally open the window, and clear away snow from around the exhaust pipe to prevent it from being buried in the snow so as not to allow fumes to enter the vehicle and cause carbon monoxide poisoning.

- If you abandon the vehicle, please leave the key in the ignition and a note as to how you can be contacted, so as not to hinder snow clearing or rescue activities.