

SEVERE WEATHER PHENOMENA

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- Be constantly informed by radio and television on the progress of the phenomena. The General Secretariat for Civil Protection and the National Meteorological Service are the formal sources of information.
- In case of emergency call alternatively: the Police (100), the Fire Service (199) the National Center for Emergency Care/ EKAB (166) or the European Emergency Call Number (112).
- Place the above mentioned phone numbers in a visible position inside the house and make sure that your children are informed of them, if they are able to use them.
- Help your children learn important family data such as their last name, the address and the phone number of your home.
- Explain to all family members when and how to switch off electric power, natural gas and water supply, how to use the fire-extinguisher and how to call for help.
- Be equipped with emergency equipment, such as a first aid kit, fire extinguisher, torch and batteries, a portable radio etc.
- Take special care of children and the elderly.

AFTER THE BAD WEATHER

- Be constantly informed by radio and television for formal warnings or advice.
- Check the house and the rest of your property to draw up a list of eventual damages.

If you are going to travel

- Be informed of the weather and the condition of the roads.
- Be prepared, according to your destination, for any weather phenomena you may encounter (snow, ice, hail, rainfall, etc.)
- Plan your movement in a way not to coincide with the peak of the weather phenomena.
- Travel during the day and prefer highways avoiding deserted and difficult to access roads.
- Inform all your relatives of the itinerary you intend to follow.
- Don't ignore the instructions of the General Secretariat for Civil Protection, the weather forecasts and the instructions of the Authorities, such as the Traffic Police, the Port Authority, the Fire Service, etc.
- Check the condition of your car before attempting any movement.
- Equip your car with all necessary equipment in order to face any heavy weather phenomena (tire chains, anti-freeze, umbrellas, raincoats, rubber boots, a torch, first aid kit etc).
- If you have to move on foot, put on suitable clothes and shoes.
- Be careful when walking in order to avoid being injured due to the slipperiness of the roads and pavements or due to objects falling by the wind or hail.
- Prefer public transport.
- Remain calm and be patient. Panic makes the situation worse.
- Facilitate the work of the Authorities.

SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR EACH PHENOMENON

STRONG WINDS

GETTING PREPARED

Before and during gale force winds

- Secure all objects that may be swept along by the wind causing damages or injuries.
- Secure any billboards you may have installed.
- Secure doors and windows in your home or workplace.
- Avoid activities at shore and coastal areas.

- Avoid passing under big trees, under suspended signs and generally near areas where light objects (such as flower pots, broken glasses etc) may fall on the ground (i.e., under balconies etc).

STORMS

DURING THE STORM

If indoors

- Secure all objects that may be carried away by the wind or the heavy rain and cause damage or injuries.
- Secure all suspended signs and billboards.
- Secure doors and windows.
- Do not hold electric equipment or the telephone as thunder may pass through the wires. TV sets should be unplugged from antenna and power supply.
- Avoid touching water pipes (kitchen, bathroom) as they are good electricity conductors.

If outdoors

- Seek refuge in a building or a car, otherwise sit on the ground without lying down.
- If you are in the woods, protect yourself under the dense branches of low trees.
- Never stand under a tall tree in an open space.
- If you are in low land, be careful as a flood may occur.
- Don't stand close to transmission pylons, tall trees, fences, telephone cables and electric lines.
- Avoid being close to metal objects (such as cars, bicycles, camping equipment, etc).
- Stay away from rivers, lakes or other water bodies.
- If you are in the sea, get out quickly.
- If you are isolated on a plane area and feel your hair stand up (a fact that indicates the imminent occurrence of lightning), assume duck position, burry your head between legs (to minimize the surface of your body and the contact with ground) and throw away any metal objects you carry.

In a vehicle

- Stop the car by the roadside away from trees that may fall on the car.
- Stay in the car and turn on the emergency lights until the storm stops.
- Close the windows and do not touch metal objects in the car.
- Avoid flooded roads.

DURING HAIL

Protect yourself immediately. Do not leave the safe place unless you make sure that the storm has stopped. Hail can also be very dangerous for animals

Evaluation of the distance from the storm

- Calculate the time between the lightning and the thunder in seconds. Divide the time calculated by 3 in order to calculate the distance of the storm in kilometers.
- Take all necessary measures quickly, before the storm reaches you. This distance is indicative as the storm may appear very quickly above the area where you are.

SNOWFALL

Before the snowfall or the snowstorm

If you live in a mountainous or difficult to access area facing problems by snowfalls

- Be equipped with heating materials and food provisions for several days.
- Be equipped with the necessary equipment to remove the snow (i.e. shovels).

DURING THE SNOWFALL OR THE SNOWSTORM

If you are indoors

- Keep your house warm and stay indoors, as much as possible.
- Do not let children go out unaccompanied.
- Put on suitable clothes and shoes.
- Inspect the water supply as well as the pipes and solar heater panels.

In a vehicle

- Avoid driving in rough mountain areas.
- Change your itinerary if there is a strong snowfall and you are in a rough road.
- Keep a safe distance from the vehicles in front of you.
- Stay in the car if it has stopped. Put a bright colored cloth on the radio antenna or other visible spot so that the rescue teams can locate you. Start the engine for 10 minutes per hour and remove snow from the exhaust.

If outdoors

- Go to a safe place without exposing yourself to the snowstorm.
- Dress in layers of light and warm clothing instead of one heavy layer. Put on warm and waterproof boots. Prefer waterproof overcoat.
- Be extremely careful when moving in areas where snowfalls are expected to occur.
- If it is absolutely necessary to drive, use tire chains. Prefer to travel during the day. Use highways and inform your relatives of your itinerary.
- If you need to travel in the city, prefer public transport.

FROST

GETTING PREPARED

- Special attention is required in the areas where frost has been created when you drive. Be informed in advance, for the road network situation and make sure that you carry tire chains.
- If you are on foot wear suitable shoes and be careful so as to avoid injury because of slippery roads, pavements etc.

Residential water supply grids

Learn where exactly your water-meter is. Observe carefully where the central and the circumferential water valves (switches of your building) are situated. Inspect and make sure that all water supply valves switch on and off and work properly.

- Make sure the external pipes (e.g. solar heater, balcony taps) are insulated. In the opposite case, you must take care that they are insulated the soonest possible.
- If you are going to be absent for a long time during winter insulate or better drain the network of the solar–water heating system. In addition regulate the heating system of your building, in order to be operated automatically in low temperatures.
- In case you have a solar–water heating system take care during the frost (especially at night) to switch off the water supply towards the boiler and empty out the water from the system.
- Don't waste water to remove the snow or the frost.

- Try to limit the daily activities that demand increased water consumption (such as washing machines etc).
- Learn whether the manufacturing company or a technician has put anti-freeze liquid in your solar water heater (in the case of closed circuit). If not, get the proper anti-freeze and put it.
- Make sure that there is no tap or toilet leakage otherwise repair them immediately.
- Be sure that the drains in the balconies and terraces are clean from leaves and rubbish and operate normally.

In case the central pipes freeze

- Switch off immediately the central valve of water-supply of your building and check your water-meter. If it continues to “run”, this means that there is leakage in your network. Switch off immediately the central water supply valve and call a plumber.
- If you decide to defrost the pipes, start from the part of pipe near the valve so that the temperature change is gradual. If there are no results call a plumber.
- Check if the electrical installations are wet or in danger and insulate them.

HEAT WAVE

DURING A HEATWAVE

- Avoid sunbathing and remain in shaded and cool places avoiding crowded places.
- Avoid heavy physical work, particularly in places with high temperature, no wind and great humidity. Avoid walking for a long period of time or running under the sun.
- Prefer light, comfortable and light colored clothing from porous material in order to facilitate the airing of the body and the vaporization of sweat. Wear a hat or other head gear from natural material that permits the good airing of the head. Wear black or dark colored glasses with special layer which protect the eyes from the reflection of the sun.
- Prefer small and light meals, with emphasis on fruits and vegetables. Limit fatty foods.
- Drink large amounts of liquids (water and fruit juices). If sweating is intense, add salt to your food. Avoid alcoholic drinks.
- Have many lukewarm showers during the day and place wet washcloths on your head and neck.
- Take care of family members suffering from chronic diseases (respiratory, cardiovascular etc). Consult their doctor for the application of special instructions. For those who take medicines also consult their doctor.
- Avoid long travels with public transport when the heat is at very high levels.

CARE FOR BABIES AND CHILDREN

- Dress them as lightly as possible. Make sure their hands and feet are free and not covered by nappies.
- Make sure they are not exposed to the sun after swimming and they always wear a hat.
- In addition to milk, it is recommended they drink other liquids as well. Consult your pediatrician.
- As far as children are concerned, make sure they drink a lot of fluids (water and juices) and they eat more vegetables and fruits and fewer fats.

CARE FOR ELDERLY PERSONS

- Move them to cooler places or areas (seaside or mountain), as a very hot and damp environment becomes dangerous. Alternatively, take care that they stay in lower apartments of multi-storey houses.
- During nighttime keep the house open so that it is cooled and during daytime keep it hermetically closed.
- Don't leave elderly persons alone during summer vacations or during many days' absence from home. In the opposite case, make sure that a person takes care of them.