



**MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**  
**NEWS RELEASE**  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MEMA urges safety when using alternative heat sources**

**PEARL** – Power outages may occur during the severe winter storm system moving across the state today and tonight, and Mississippi Emergency Management Agency officials want to remind residents to be careful when using alternative heating sources.

“Proper use of heating devices in your home really can be a matter of life or death,” said MEMA Director Mike Womack. “Please use these devices properly and follow directions to ensure you and your family are warm and safe should you lose power.”

MEMA recommends the following precautions in case of a winter storm power outage:

- Never place a space heater on top of furniture or near water. Use space heaters with automatic shut-off switches.
- Keep heat sources at least three feet away from furniture and drapes. Never leave children unattended near a space heater.
- Never use an electric generator indoors, inside the garage or near the air intake of your home because of the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Do not use generator or appliances if they are wet.
- Do not store gasoline indoors where fumes could ignite.
- Never use charcoal grills or portable gas camp stove indoors – the fumes are deadly.
- Use battery-powered flashlights or lanterns. Avoid using candles.

For more information, contact MEMA External Affairs at 866-920-MEMA (6362), or visit us online at [www.msema.org](http://www.msema.org). For the latest forecast information visit the National Weather Service at [www.srh.noaa.gov](http://www.srh.noaa.gov) and click on your area. MEMA will also post updates on its Facebook and Twitter pages.

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