

Winter Storm Warning issued for area

by Bend Weekly News Sources

A strong storm is expected to blow into the Bend and Central Oregon areas this afternoon, with snow accumulations of 5-to-9 inches overnight, the National Weather Service has warned.

A winter storm warning is in effect from 4 p.m. this afternoon to noon Saturday, with light to moderate snow developing later this afternoon and becoming heavier at times tonight.

Treacherous driving conditions caused by blowing and drifting snow are possible with gusty winds of 15-25 miles per hour (mph) expected today, increasing to up to 30 mph tonight, and expected to peak Saturday with wind speeds up to 30 mph. Drivers are advised to exercise extreme caution.

Areas west of U.S. Highway 97 are expected to see the most accumulation of snow. Oregon drivers are required by law to carry chains or use approved traction tires -- regardless of road conditions -- on certain sections of several local highway systems including US Highway 97, US Highway 20, US Highway 26, ORE-58, ORE-126, and I-5. There are also requirements that motorists use chains or traction tires on certain sections of roadway. Check at www.tripcheck.com or dial 511 for more information.

Winter motorists are reminded that it is wise to carry an emergency travel kit in your vehicle that includes items that may increase your level of comfort and chances of survival if stranded on icy or snow-covered highways. These items may include emergency flares or hazard triangles; a flashlight; matches, lighter, magnesium stick, or other means to start a fire; a shovel; blankets; a tarp; a mirror which can be used for signaling; warm clothing including a hat; water; non-perishable high-calorie food or snacks; and a cell phone with charger.

The National Weather Services issues a winter storm warning when significant amounts of snow, sleet, and ice are expected or occurring. For more information, visit www.weather.gov/pendleton.

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