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**KENT COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT**  
**Lawrence A. Stelma – Sheriff**

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701 Ball Avenue, N.E. • Grand Rapids • Michigan • 49503



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**November 13, 2014**

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**Cold Weather, Snow Call for Being Prepared**

**GRAND RAPIDS** – Emergency responders were busy Thursday morning due to slide-offs and accidents caused by winter weather conditions. Cold weather has made its return, and the forecasts call for freezing temperatures over the next week to ten days. Kent County Emergency Management reminds everyone to pay attention to weather conditions before heading out the door. Give yourself a few extra minutes to arrive on time.

The cold can cause problems for many, especially people with pre-existing medical conditions, young children, and seniors. “Be a good friend or neighbor. Check on those who are elderly or have a medical condition,” says Jack Stewart, Kent County Emergency Management Coordinator. “Making a daily call or visit part of your routine could really help someone in need.”

If you haven’t shut off water to your outdoor spigots yet, do it now. Make sure you have emergency kits in your car and home this winter. The Michigan Committee for Severe Weather Awareness recommends you keep the following items in your home:

- Battery-powered flashlight
- Batteries
- Weather and/or portable radio
- Extra food (canned or dried food is best) and a can opener
- Bottled water (at least 3 gallons per person)
- First aid kit

“If you lose power in your home and use a generator, be sure that you follow the manufacturer’s instructions to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning,” Stewart says. “Also know the hazards if you need an emergency heating source, like a space heater.” Keep emergency supplies in your car as well. A small battery powered radio and extra batteries, a cell phone, and a blanket should always be kept within reach.

This early in the season, pets may be more vulnerable to the cold. Keep pets indoors as much as possible. The smaller the pet, the quicker the cold impacts them. Puppies and kittens are especially sensitive to the cold, as are older pets. Watch out for community cats that might crawl under the hood of your car to keep warm. Bang loudly on the hood before starting the car, and never leave pets in a car during the winter. Temperatures can be just as cold inside the car as they are outdoors.

More tips on winter preparedness from the Michigan Committee for Severe Weather Awareness can be found at: [www.mcswa.com/Winter-Hazards.html](http://www.mcswa.com/Winter-Hazards.html).

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