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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT AND CITY OFFICIALS REMIND RESIDENTS TO TAKE
PRECAUTIONS DURING COLD WEATHER**

*Collaborative City services will be in effect during the winter season to ensure the safety of all
Chicagoans in the coming months*

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot, along with the Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC), Department of Streets and Sanitation (DSS), other City departments and sister agencies today reminded residents about the City's available services during the winter months and provided residents with tips to avoid inclement weather and health emergencies during the winter season.

"The City is prepared to work around the clock to ensure the safety and well-being of every resident during the upcoming winter season," Mayor Lightfoot said. "Our departments and agencies are taking a proactive, collaborative approach, ensuring Chicagoans know about the resources and options available in every community as we prepare for severe winter weather."

OEMC urges residents to prepare for cold temperatures and snowy conditions throughout the winter by taking steps, such as creating emergency kits for residences and vehicles and stocking up on necessities, which will help in emergency situations or if weather conditions become dangerous.

"The City of Chicago works with the National Weather Service on an on-going basis to prepare for extreme weather as early as possible should it occur, and continues to implement, coordinate and improve plans to adapt to changing conditions to keep residents safe during the winter season," said OEMC Executive Director Rich Guidice. "We encourage



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residents to do their part this winter by taking the necessary precautions to keep safe, including dressing appropriately for the weather and driving according to conditions."

Parking Restrictions and Overnight Parking Ban

The Chicago Department of Streets and Sanitation manages more than 9,400 lane miles of roadway and maintains a fleet of more than 300 snow vehicles, including 20 new salt spreaders that have been serviced and staged in preparation for the winter season. In addition, the Department has 374,000 tons of salt stationed at 19 salt piles throughout the city.

Residents are reminded that Chicago's annual winter Overnight Parking Ban is currently in effect. The ban, which began this past Sunday, December 1, 2019, will be enforced through Wednesday, April 1, 2020, daily from 3 a.m. to 7 a.m., regardless of snow. The Overnight Parking Ban impacts approximately 107 miles of Chicago's streets and signage is permanently posted along the affected routes. Violators will face a minimum \$150 towing fee, a \$60 ticket and a storage fee of \$20 per day. Vehicles in violation of the ban will be towed to Pounds 2 (10301 S. Doty Ave) or 6 (701 N. Sacramento Ave.).

"Winter weather can be unpredictable, and we continue to remind motorists to refrain from parking on these critical routes to help us ensure they remain clean and safe," said Commissioner John Tully, Department of Streets and Sanitation. "We encourage motorists to double check posted signage to avoid having their vehicles ticketed and towed."

Cars parked in violation of the Overnight Parking Ban prevent critical routes from being fully plowed and salted when it snows. During a snowfall, a build-up of snow and ice next to parked vehicles on these routes further reduces traffic flow and can cause unsafe conditions.

Chicagoans can visit www.chicagoshovels.org for a map of streets impacted by the ban and to view the City's snow plows in real-time during a storm. Motorists can also call 311 or visit www.chicago.gov/dss to find out if their vehicle was towed due to the ban.

Information for Homeowners, Renters

Officials remind residents to be cognizant of weather conditions, heed the warnings given by experts, know the implications of wind chill advisories, winter storm watches and warnings. Residents should know the signs and care of frostbite and hypothermia. Officials advise to winterize your home and vehicles, and keep cell phones charged with extra batteries for emergencies.

Chicago's Snow Removal Ordinance requires property owners to clear a path at least five feet wide on all of the sidewalks adjacent to their property, including any crosswalk ramps. In addition, property owners are not allowed to shovel snow into the right-of-way, which includes: transit stops and bus pads, parking spaces, bike lanes, bike racks, Divvy stations and any other space where snow impedes traffic of any kind. Individuals found pushing



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snow into the public right of way may be subject to a citation. If you are responsible for a corner lot, you must remove snow and ice from sidewalks on all sides of your building and from corner sidewalk ramps. This applies to residential property and business owners.

The Chicago Department of Water Management encourages residents to act now to make sure pipes are properly insulated and not exposed to freezing air. This includes pipes in garages and unheated areas of the home. During periods of extreme cold, residents are encouraged to let their faucets drip to ensure pipes don't freeze. If pipes do freeze, do not use candles or any open flame to thaw them. Use a hair dryer or heating pad.

The Chicago Heat Ordinance mandates that landlords supply heat to rental units during cold weather months. From September 15 to June 1, the temperature inside a rental residence must be at least 68 degrees during the day. During the evening, the temperatures must be at least 66 degrees. The Department of Buildings encourages residents to first contact their landlords when these temperatures are not maintained and to call 3-1-1 if no action is being taken. During extreme cold weather the Department's first priority is responding to heat complaints and it reassigns inspectors to handle the increased number of heat complaints.

The Chicago Fire Department does not recommend using space heaters; however, if used, be sure they are UL certified and at least 3 feet from anything that can ignite. Use of a space heater in children's rooms should be monitored closely as children sometimes move them close to or into the bed with tragic results. If extension cords are used, they should be rated at 15 amps minimum and never put cords under carpet. With the added demand on furnaces and boilers, the Chicago Fire Department also reminds residents they are required by ordinance to have working carbon monoxide detectors to protect against carbon monoxide leaks from a heating system that could be fatal over time.

In heavy snow, the Chicago Fire Department asks that residents shovel around hydrants so the Fire Department can find them and hook a hose up faster in the event of a fire. Don't park within 15 feet of hydrants - the house you save could be your own.

Peoples Gas customers who are having trouble paying their bills and meet the specific household income guidelines may be eligible for a grant. Through the Share the Warmth program, which is Administered for Peoples Gas by the Community and Economic Development Association (CEDA), Share the Warmth provides heating grants to limited and fixed-income households. Eligible customers can receive grants of up to \$200 on their bills.

For more information and apply for the program, call the Community and Economic Development Association (CEDA) at 800-571-2332 or use the CEDA Energy Service Site Locator to find the application site nearest you. Applicants are required to submit proof of household income or any financial assistance for the past 30 days for all members of the household over age 18; and current residential heating bill.

Peoples Gas also suggests the following winter weather safety tips for residents:

- Regular inspection and servicing of your boiler/furnace will ensure it is running safely and efficiently.



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- Keep the area around natural gas appliances clutter free to avoid a fire hazard; never store flammables near a furnace.
- Ensure natural gas appliances are correctly flued and have the correct ventilation to avoid carbon monoxide (CO) to build up in living areas.
- When lit, make sure the flames are blue; a yellow flame could indicate the presence of CO.
- Understand the dangers and symptoms of carbon monoxide, and have CO detectors installed
- and test regularly.
- Keep natural gas meters clear of ice and snow for safety and accessibility.
- Never shovel snow up against meters or let excessive snow cover them.
- Remove snow and ice from meters by hand or with a broom. Shovels and other tools can damage the equipment.

OEMC encourages residents to keep an emergency kit at home and on-the-go and to keep informed of weather conditions throughout the season. For more winter weather preparedness tips, visit www.chicago.gov/oemc. To receive Chicago emergency and non-emergency notifications, follow OEMC on Twitter via the handle @ChicagoOEMC and register at www.NotifyChicago.org.

Warming Centers

The Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) operates six Community Service Centers located throughout the city that double as warming centers on weekdays during the winter months when temperatures fall below 32 degrees. These Community Service Centers are open weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. One of these facilities, the Garfield Community Service Center at 10 South Kedzie, is open on a 24-hour basis.

During extreme weather, the City has a network of facilities that can serve as warming centers, including Chicago Public Library branches and Chicago Park District facilities during normal location hours, which vary by location. On evenings, weekends or holidays, City-operated facilities such as police stations can also serve as warming centers if they are needed.

On weekdays, DFSS operates the City's six Regional Senior Centers and 15 Satellite Senior Centers where seniors can go to keep warm in addition to taking part in numerous activities. Those seeking a warm place to go after hours should call 3-1-1. Seniors or individuals with limited mobility may call 3-1-1 to request a ride to any of the centers. And individuals requiring emergency overnight shelter should also call 3-1-1.

Information and multilingual fliers containing warming center information in English, Spanish and Polish are posted on DFSS's website and Facebook pages at www.chicago.gov/FSS and www.facebook.com/chicagoDFSS.



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Information for Travelers, Public Transportation Users and Bicyclists

The Chicago Department of Aviation reminds those with travel plans through O'Hare or Midway International Airports to check their airline's website for flight status before going to the airport and to plan to arrive at least two hours in advance of their scheduled domestic flight and three hours ahead of an international flight. Travelers are encouraged to check for updates by following O'Hare's Facebook page or Twitter account @fly2ohare and Midway's Facebook page or Twitter account @fly2midway, in addition to their website, www.FlyChicago.com.

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) staff is extensively trained on handling winter weather operations and will, working closely with OEMC and other City agencies, carefully monitor weather and traffic conditions to quickly adapt transit operations to changing circumstances. CTA buses and rail system are equipped with features designed to mitigate the effects of cold temperatures and snow.

CTA is also prepared to communicate timely service information to customers in the event of unplanned changes or significant delays in service through informational displays at rail stations and select bus stops; and through social media (Twitter and Facebook) and CTA's web site. CTA also encourages customers to sign up at www.transitchicago.com for free subscription service alerts to be notified of service changes or issues.

The Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) is responsible for clearing snow from protected bike lanes, downtown bridge decks and some expressway overpasses. New this year, residents can request snow clearing from a protected bike lane or bridge sidewalk through Chicago by calling 3-1-1, online at 311.Chicago.gov or through the CHI 311 mobile app on their phones.

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