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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WITH WINTER APPROACHING, DECEMBER IS THE RIGHT TIME TO PREPARE FOR SNOWSTORMS AND COLD WEATHER

Westminster, Friday, December 4, 2015 – The arrival of the holiday season is the right time to make sure you are prepared for winter weather. Here in Carroll County, the winter season can bring the potential for cold weather and slippery roads and sidewalks.

“Our County could experience winter storms this season,” said Doug Brown, Carroll County Emergency Management Coordinator. “Preparedness before the snow falls and the temperature drops is essential and helps our community remain resilient.”

“It is difficult to predict exactly what type of winter weather will affect Maryland in any given year, but history shows us that most of the State will have to deal with some bad weather over the next few months,” said Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) Executive Director Russ Strickland. “It’s better to make preparations now so you can avoid the last minute rush for snow shovels, salt, and other winter essentials.”

When cold weather hits, you should check on the welfare of family, friends, and neighbors who are particularly vulnerable to cold, snow, and ice – this may include the elderly and those with access and functional needs. It is also important to make sure your vehicle is ready for winter travel and that you have prepared your pets for bad weather.

When a wind chill advisory or warning is issued for our area, or extremely low temperatures are in the forecast, Warming Centers may open throughout Carroll County. When the announcement is made, Carroll County’s Department of Citizen Services will operate six warming centers around the County. The public libraries will also be open and available to anyone in need of a warm place. When the Warming Centers are opened, all residents who are vulnerable to extreme cold and who do not have sufficient heat in their homes will be encouraged to seek warmth in any of these locations.

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CARROLL COUNTY

The Americans with Disabilities Act applies to the Carroll County Government and its programs, services, activities, and facilities. Anyone requiring an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication or who has a complaint should contact The Department of Citizen Services, 410.386.3600 or 1.888.302.8978 or MD Relay 7-1-1/1.800.735.2258 as soon as possible but no later than 72 hours before the scheduled event.

Follow a trusted weather source, such as the National Weather Service or local news media, to be aware of any predicted frozen precipitation or severe cold. In addition, the Carroll County Department of Public Safety – Emergency Management recommends taking the following actions prior to the winter season:

- Build a home preparedness kit that includes winter supplies such as snow shovels, ice melting products, extra warm clothes and blankets, flashlights, and batteries.
- Insulate your home by installing storm windows or covering windows with plastic from the inside to keep cold air out.
- If you will be going away during cold weather, leave the heat on in your home and set the thermostat to no lower than 55° Fahrenheit.
- Check and winterize your vehicle, including all fluids, wiper blades, lights, and systems before the winter season begins. Have a car emergency kit in your vehicle.
- Use caution with space heaters. For more safety tips when using space heaters, see <http://ccgovernment.carr.org/ccg/pubsafe/docs/FEMA-winter-fire-safety.pdf?x=1447771794130>

Additional information about staying safe during winter weather is available from the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) in its recently released winter preparedness video. Find it at www.youtube.com/user/StateMarylandMEMA.

For more safety tips, refer to the Citizen's Guide to Emergency Preparedness, available on-line at <http://ccgovernment.carr.org/ccg/emermang/docs/ReadyGuide.pdf?x=1447772578265>, or download the Prepare Me Carroll smartphone app from the Apple store or Google Play. Prepare Me Carroll provides winter weather preparedness information, a handy emergency kit checklist, and a convenient link to the National Weather Service forecast right in the palm of your hand.

For information about Carroll's Senior and Community Centers, call the Bureau of Aging and Disabilities at (410) 386-3800. Information about Carroll County Public Library branches can be obtained by calling (410) 386-4488.

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