

CHRIS'LL DEAL WITH IT

episode notes



EP 18 - Be A Blizzard Wizard



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Here in the Northeast, winter slowly approaches. Over the years, I've witnessed many incidents due to poor planning. On today's episode, I'll share some tips that might help people experienced with blizzards to those who get the rare winter dusting. There's plenty of actionable advice for dealing with all kinds of storms, so let's unpack what it takes to be a Blizzard Wizard.

See storms through the lens of *What If?*

- In Stoic philosophy there's a concept of imagining the worst

"Misfortune weighs most heavily on those who expect nothing but good fortune" - Seneca

- There is a difference between **contemplating** bad things happening & **worrying** about them.
- Doing so helps you appreciate the good of your current situations - valuing what you have.
- Being snowed in might mean cancelled plans, extra shoveling, and increased heating bills.
- But it can also yield good: More time to read or listen to a book, extra outdoor exercise, and memorable moments with kids. Perhaps a board game?

- Too often people will use a storm to complain or wish they were somewhere else. Be where you are! Make the best of it

Before The Season

- Check your tools:
 - If you have a snow-blower, run it. Make sure to check the oil and smooth operation of all its features.
 - Check your supply of extra fuel
 - Check your shovels for small cracks, bent or loose handles. You don't want it to break in the middle of a blizzard.
- Prepare your car:
 - Do you need to swap out your tires for all-weather or snow tires?
 - Keep a shovel, ice scraper, and extra gloves in the car.
 - You can put a bag of kitty litter in the trunk. It'll help with traction if you get stuck, and for lighter cars, the extra weight can give a tiny bit of extra weight to help increase tire friction against the ice.
 - People in warmer climates often drive rear wheel drive vehicles, these tend to tailspin when they lose traction so weighing down the back of the vehicle helps with control.
 - People that don't live in climates prone to freezing often will use water in their windshield wiper fluid tanks. This can freeze and bust your tank!

Before The Storm

- Be okay asking neighbors for help. If you're sick, injured, lacking food or proper tools, neighbors will always share.
 - So, if you don't know your neighbors - Get on that! Introduce yourself, exchange numbers, get to know them and their unique situations.
 - If you're able to help them, make sure they know you're willing and can rely on you.
- Most municipalities have an e-mail alert & notification system: Sign up!

- For Vehicles:
 - Fuel all of them up
 - Keep streets clear: Make it as easy as possible for plows to operate
 - Parking on the street can negatively impact your neighbors, because it might force a plow to take a wide turn, reducing the closeness to their driveway.
 - Parking on the street can also limit throughput on a street: Don't be the reason an ambulance or fire truck can't get to a neighbor (or you) quickly
 - Install vertical markers/reflectors at each corner of your driveway. You can get these for a few bucks at most home improvement stores.
 - Check the emergency supplies in the car:
 - Extra clothes
 - Blankets
 - Hats & gloves
 - Food
 - Water
 - Road flares
 - First aid kit
- Go food shopping - ensure you have enough shelf-stable foods that can survive a prolonged power outage
 - Likewise, avoid getting too many items that need refrigeration
 - If you're a household that eats out a lot, or relies heavily on meal kit deliveries or on services like Uber Eats, GrubHub or Doordash, remember that you're likely going to see disruption in those services. So ensure you have enough staples to survive the week.
 - Be sure you know how to cook a few staples, including some that don't require anything that uses electricity.
- Have a plan to stay warm if the power goes out: Blankets, fireplaces

- **Never use an oven to heat ANY space if your home. It's insanely dangerous!!!**
- Good idea to check your home for any drafts - blocking them off will help keep some heat in the home.
- If someone in your home requires regular medication or personal care items: Stock up if you can.
- Purchase large bags of salt well before winter. It's more cost effective to buy the larger bulk bags and keep it in a garage or basement. Then you can refill a small spreading container from there.
 - Be sure to get pet safe salt if you have pets who take a tinkle outside
 - Also: Don't salt before the storm: You'll likely to create an wet layer underneath the snow, which can freeze into ice. Then you've got a slip risk and made it harder to shovel.
 - At best, when you go to shovel you'll likely be shoveling away salty snow, which will hurt areas where it's thrown when it melts.
- Pre-plan your emergency escape.
 - Park cars nose facing the road - especially helpful if you only have a front-wheel drive vehicle.
 - Park near entrance of your driveway, but not right at the front: There's a risk of a plow or skidding car striking your car.
 - Plows will also dump extra snow at the front of your driveway. If your car is there it makes it much harder to shovel out.

During The Storm

- Always be aware of the situation outside.
- Have a 'Ready To Act' mindset: If there's an emergency in the home, could first responders get to you in time? Every minute might matter.
- Go out multiple times, clearing all walkways.
 - If your home has multiple exists, clear at least 2 of them in case of a fire.
 - Ensure a clear path to your car.

- And if you're shoveling at night: Wear a headlamp and reflective clothing or market lights if you can. Plows often run throughout the night!
- If you do have to leave your home, be smart about it:
 - **CLEAN OFF YOUR ENTIRE CAR:** Not just your windows and rear-view mirrors, but your entire roof, headlights, tail-lights, hood, clear out in front of your wiper fluid nozzles. Be sure to knock out any clumps in & around your wheel-wells.
 - Know that in many places it's illegal to drive with snow on your vehicle. It can hurt not only your visibility, but also those driving around you. I've had entire sheets of icy snow fly off the roof of cars in front of me and smash into my windshield. So please: Don't be that person!
 - **GO SLOW:** Speed increases the risk and severity of skidding, fish-tailing, etc...
 - If you leave near a main street, watch for opportunities to go out right after a salt truck has passed.
 - Remember that driving is all about maintaining high friction with the road, and keeping as much space between your car and other vehicles as possible.
 - Your stopping distance will be much longer than usual, so be wary at stop signs and traffic lights.
 - With traffic lights, they rarely will adjust their timing for weather, and you'll need a lot more time to stop safely. Best to slow down as you approach them, even if they're green.

Episode 18 Quote:

From Viktor Frankl's book *Man's Search For Meaning*.

If we take man as he really is, we make him worse, but if we overestimate him If we seem to be idealists and are overestimating, overrating man, and looking at him that high, here above, you know what happens? We promote him to what he really can be.

