



An Roinn Tithíochta, Pleanála  
agus Rialtais Áitiúil  
Department of Housing, Planning  
and Local Government

## **Minister Eoghan Murphy to convene National Emergency Co-ordination Group for Severe Weather on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

Following advice from the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM) in the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, which is the Lead Government Department for the response to severe weather, Minister Eoghan Murphy will convene the National Emergency Co-ordination Group for Severe Weather at 10.30am on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2018, in advance of the anticipated severe cold weather this week.

Met Éireann is forecasting a severe spell of cold weather this week and has advised at noon today, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2018, that exceptionally cold weather will occur this week. Air and ground temperatures will be 5 to 10 degrees below normal, with significant wind chill and penetrating severe frosts. Snow showers, mainly affecting eastern areas on Tuesday, will progressively become more widespread and heavier through midweek, with significant and disruptive accumulations.

Met Éireann will be issuing snow/ice warnings during the week using its colour coded system of Yellow, Orange and Red, the public are encouraged to monitor these and take appropriate action.

This weather event is likely to have a significant and disruptive impact. People are advised to consult <https://www.winterready.ie> for advice on preparing for and dealing with extremely cold conditions and snow.

In relation to our most vulnerable and in order to ensure that arrangements are in place across the country, so that all homeless individuals and rough sleepers have shelter and accommodation during the forthcoming cold spell, Minister Murphy has requested his Department to make contact with local authorities and a range of homeless agencies, in relation to arrangements for rough sleepers.

Local authorities have now confirmed that they will keep all cold weather initiatives for rough sleepers in place and additional capacity has been put in place to ensure that there are additional bed spaces available for rough sleepers that would not normally avail of homeless services in the main urban areas of Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford. In Dublin, the Dublin Region Homeless Executive has secured an additional 84 beds and 'one night only' beds will remain open on a 24 hour basis. Two outreach teams will be working on the streets to encourage rough sleepers to come into shelter. Members of the public are also being asked to contact their local authority to report any rough sleepers that they have concerns about and any such cases will be followed up. In the Dublin region, members of the public can report cases of concern through the following weblink; <http://www.homelessdublin.ie/report-rough-sleeper#1>

Minister Murphy emphasised “Rough sleepers require additional supports and the Government is working hard to implement solutions. Extensive efforts have been made to deliver new accommodation with over 200 new beds provided in the Dublin region towards the end of 2017. The introduction of these additional beds has enabled the State to provide medical supports and the appropriate interventions to individuals, who otherwise would be outside the system and on our streets”.

Irish Water has mobilised its Crisis Management arrangements to deal with operational impacts of the expected severe weather nationwide. Severe weather can result in big demand increases due to additional pipe bursts and additional water use. In particular, Irish Water is advising that the water supply to the Greater Dublin Area is running at full capacity at the moment, with some operational issues impacting production. In order to avoid the need for restrictions, households & businesses are urgently asked to conserve water, refrain from leaving taps running and to report any visible leaks. Unattended premises should be checked for possible burst pipes caused by freezing temperature.

Minister Murphy will attend the National Emergency Co-ordination Group for Severe Weather at 10.30am on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2018, in advance of the anticipated severe cold weather.

**ENDS 25/2/2018**