

For further information on services for the aging
in Delaware County, call:

COSA



1510 Chester Pike
Suite 250

Eddystone, PA 19022

(610) 490-1300

www.delcosa.org

COOSA@co.delaware.pa.us

Weather line (for recorded informational tips only)

call (610) 872-1558

WINTER WEATHER WARM UP

TIPS TO STAYING HEALTHY IN THE

COLD WEATHER THIS WINTER



Delaware County Office of Services for the Aging



Old Man Winter is never far from being around the corner with his blasts of icy cold air and snow. Snowy weather and cold temperatures are a bother for everyone; but for seniors, it can simply be dangerous, and even life-threatening.

Every time the temperature drops one degree Celsius below the average, approximately 8000 deaths of elderly people occur over the winter months.

Hypothermia is a condition marked by abnormally low internal body temperature. Hypothermia can be called a “silent killer” in the sense that many of its victims are unaware of its threat. Temperatures do not have to be below freezing to get hypothermia, especially for vulnerable individuals.

Because older adults have slower metabolisms, they produce less body heat. Also, with age, the sense of touch declines which makes it more difficult for the elderly to tell if the temperature is too low. Elderly who live on their own are particularly vulnerable because, in attempts to economize, they often cut back on heating their home, which could lead to serious consequences. Certain medications, such as antidepressants and cardiovascular drugs, affect the body’s ability to regulate temperature properly, so you should check with your doctor or pharmacist for information on drugs that may increase your chances for hypothermia.

- **Emergency Shelter Directory and Survival Guide: Contact the Delaware County Department of Human Services-Office of Behavioral Health- Division of Adult and Family Services at 610-713-2365.**

Survival Guide and Emergency Shelter Directory can be viewed at:

<http://delcohsa.org/adultfamily.html>

Other Helpful Resources

- **Community Action Agency of Delaware County's Weatherization Program**

Weatherization provides a cost-effective permanent solution for reducing the heavy energy burden on low-income Americans and runs all year round. To apply for the Weatherization Program or for additional information, residents can contact CAADC at (610) 521-8770.

<https://caadc.org>

- **LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program)**

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, also known as LIHEAP, helps low-income families pay for their heating bills. LIHEAP is a grant that offers assistance in the form of a cash grant, sent directly to the utility company, or a crisis grant for households in immediate danger of being without heat. You can apply for the LIHEAP benefits using COMPASS. COMPASS is the name of the website where you can apply for LIHEAP and many other services that can help you make ends meet.

www.compass.state.pa.us or call 1-866-857-7095.

- **PECO**
Offers several assistance programs to help customers who may have trouble paying their energy bills or making changes toward energy efficiency.

www.peco.com



Some people **die** from hypothermia because people around them do not recognize the symptoms.

Here are some signs to watch for:

Shivering

Skin feels cold to the touch

Drowsiness or fatigue

Pale, face puffiness

Confusion or sleepiness

Slurred speech

Shallow breathing

Weak pulse or low blood pressure

Poor motor control

Stiff muscles

Blacking out or losing consciousness

Moving slowly, trouble walking, or being clumsy

Stiff and jerky arm or leg movements





What You Can Do

- Stay in warm, dry places. The thermostat should be **set at 68 degrees** or higher.
- Eat enough food to **maintain a healthy body weight**.
- Wear appropriate clothing. Several **loose layers** will keep your body warmer.
- **Insulate** your home properly.
- **Avoid alcohol**, which may cause the body to lose heat faster.
- **Drink plenty of liquids**, especially water.
- Get **plenty of rest**.
- Use **extra blankets**.
- If you **need to go outside**, wear a **hat, mittens, and a scarf** to protect your body.
- **Have a “buddy”** check in on you to make sure your health is not in jeopardy as a result of the cold weather.



COUNTY COUNCIL VALUES SENIOR CITIZENS

Delaware County Council values its senior citizens and is dedicated to ensuring that older residents can enjoy dignity, well-being and independence as long as possible in their senior years.

Nearly one in every five County residents is a member of the senior generation. County Council recognizes the contributions of seniors to our businesses, our volunteer organizations, our veterans groups, our churches, and many other valuable activities.

Through the Delaware County Office of Services for the Aging (COSA), Council is dedicated to helping seniors who need assistance in maintaining their independence and quality of life. COSA offers many helpful programs including health insurance counseling that helps seniors understand the daunting process of healthcare choices and paperwork, legal services, in-home supports and community-based services, nursing home eligibility, senior centers and much more.

To learn more about COSA services and programs, County Council encourages senior citizens and their families to contact COSA when they have a question, concern or problem. Help is a phone call away at 610-490-1300. Visit the County website www.delcopa.gov and sign up for the County's e-newsletter to stay informed.



Delaware County Council

Chairman: Brian P. Zidek

Vice Chair: Dr. Monica Taylor

Kevin M. Madden

Elaine Paul Schaefer

Christine A. Reuther

If you suspect someone is experiencing symptoms of hypothermia, call 9-1-1. While waiting for help you can:



- Be careful how you handle the person.
- Insulate him/her with coverings such as newspapers, blankets, towels, or pillows.

DO NOT:

- Attempt to rewarm the person at home with a hot bath, electric blanket, or hot water bottle. This can be very dangerous.
- Do not give the person any food or drink.
- If the person is unconscious, do not raise his/her feet. This will cause the blood to flow to the body's core and further depress the body's temperature.

We may not be able to stop Old Man Winter from sending us winter weather, but we can prepare ourselves for it when it occurs. Taking some simple precautions may prove to be life-saving.





COSA

- **Information & Assistance**

Linking to the Appropriate Services

- **In-Home Services**

Supporting Seniors & Families at Home

- **Community Services**

Helping Active Seniors

COSA is Delaware County's Area Agency on Aging. COSA has over 30 programs of service for county residents age sixty or older. COSA is an information resource for persons of any age or income needing information on benefits and services available to older or disabled persons.

COSA's eight sponsored senior centers are a perfect place to visit, get warm, enjoy a meal, and socialize.

Chester Senior Center
721 Hayes Street
Chester, PA 19013
(610) 497-3550

Surrey Havertown
401 Brookline Blvd.
Havertown, PA 19083
(610) 446-2070

Friendship Circle Senior Center
1515 Lansdowne Avenue
Darby, PA 19023
(610) 237-6222

Surrey Media
302 South Jackson Street
Media, PA 19063
(610) 566-0505

Good Neighbor Senior Center
1085 Hook Road
Sharon Hill, PA 19079
(610) 586-8170

Schoolhouse Senior Center
600 Swarthmore Avenue
Folsom, PA 19033
(610) 237-8100

Wayne Senior Center
108 Station Road
Wayne, PA 19087
(610) 688-6246

Upper Darby Senior Center
326 Watkins Avenue
Upper Darby, PA 19082
(610) 734-7652
(610) 734-7655