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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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SCEPD Activates State EOC for Winter Storm

(Columbia, SC, January 2, 2002) -- With the National Weather Service predicting a severe winter storm moving across the Southeast and into South Carolina this afternoon, the South Carolina Emergency Preparedness Division is gearing up. The State Emergency Operations Center will be partially activated at 1:00pm today to coordinate state government resources as needed for the storm.

The Division is also in contact with the Governor's office and officials from across the state to coordinate the possibility of closing State offices early. Citizens are urged to travel on the roads only if absolutely necessary and plan to get any needed supplies early today.

Citizens are also reminded to be prepared for the possibility of being snowed in for a few days. Some preparations are as follows:

- Stock up on heating fuel and prepare emergency heating sources, such as fireplaces, wood stoves and space heaters. (WARNING: Never burn charcoal indoors.)
- Don't forget the usual emergency supplies: a flashlight and batteries, a battery-powered radio, extra non-perishable food and water, extra medicines and baby items, and first-aid supplies. Top off the fuel tank in your car, check the antifreeze.
- Prepare a place indoors for pets. Move farm animals to shelters and have extra feed and water available.

"This is not the first winter storm to hit South Carolina. We've been through it before and the citizens must remember to remain calm and be prepared to be snowed in. As for SCEPD, I have total confidence in their ability to coordinate state resources should they be needed," said Adjutant General Stan Spears, who oversees the Division.

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