



CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES CHICAGO

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REMINDER TO THE FILIPINO COMMUNITY ON THE DANGERS OF WINTER WEATHER

Chicago, IL – The Philippine Consulate General urges all Filipinos in the U.S. Midwest region not to let their guards down as Winter Storm Harper now pushes into the Northeast, after dumping three inches to a foot of snow from the Dakotas across the Great Lakes, causing thousands of flight delays and cancellations as well as vehicular pileups early this weekend.

The National Weather Service (NWS) forecasted that a blast of cold arctic air would bring single digit wind chills to Illinois and neighboring states on the heels of the storm in the next couple of days. For this reason, members of the Filipino community, especially families with young children and elderly members, are strongly advised to always be prepared for winter weather conditions. Available safety information provided by state emergency management agencies includes the following usual winter weather preparedness tips:

- Being familiar with various weather alert definitions
- Winterizing homes and preventing frozen water pipes
- Creating a family emergency plan
- Building a home emergency kit with food, water, medications, flashlight and spare batteries and a portable weather radio that can receive NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) broadcasts
- Stocking vehicles with emergency items, such as a first aid kit, phone charger, blankets, extra clothes, jumper cables, kitty litter or sand, flashlight and snow scraper
- Staying in a warming center near your area in case of power outage

Transportation authorities in Illinois have advised that staying off the roads during and immediately after a storm, when possible, is important to allow crews to effectively clear and treat area roadways. If driving cannot be avoided, it is necessary to have up-to-date weather forecasts and road conditions. One should take extra precaution, slow down and anticipate longer travel times keeping a safe distance between other vehicles and sharing the road with plow trucks. Blowing and drifting snow can reduce visibility and result in slick road conditions limiting salt's effectiveness. And aside from having winter weather essentials in the car, making someone aware of one's travel route and schedule is also advised.

Staying ahead of weather disturbances by following watches and warnings issued by the NWS is a must. It is also helpful to note that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) offers a free mobile app providing emergency alert and information for five different locations. Finally, as the winter storm particularly poses threats to the elderly, their families are advised to undertake preparations to avoid serious safety and health complications, such as influenza, hypothermia and frostbite.

The Consulate General can be reached by call or text at (312) 800-3106 during weekends, holidays and outside office hours for any emergency affecting Filipino nationals. **END**

