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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**City of Milwaukee Health Department Issues Cold Weather Health Advisory**

*Officials remind area residents to take precautions as cold temperatures are predicted for Milwaukee*

MILWAUKEE – Mayor Tom Barrett and the City of Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) remind residents to take precautions as extreme cold wind chills move into the area.

The National Weather Service (NWS) has issued an alert for the area, stating that cold temperatures and brisk winds may result in wind chills that could reach between 20 and 34 degrees below zero. **A wind chill advisory begins at 12 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 7, through 12 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 8.** Following this period, there could be additional times from late Thursday night into Saturday morning with bitterly cold wind chills.

“As extremely cold wind chills move into the area, I urge all residents to take the threat seriously,” said Mayor Tom Barrett. “During this time, common activities can quickly become life-threatening. We ask that all residents take appropriate precautions, and continue to look out for one another during this period.”

“Dangerously cold wind chills can create serious health hazards,” said Commissioner of Health Bevan K. Baker. “At these wind chills, frostbite and hypothermia can become serious threats if precautions are not taken.”

To remain safe during cold weather, the MHD suggests:

- Minimizing the time spent outdoors. If you do go outside, let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.
- Wear appropriate outdoor clothing and dress in layers. Be sure to cover exposed skin, including your fingers, nose, and ears.
- Make a car survival kit that includes blankets, extra clothing and high-energy foods. Ensure that your vehicle’s fuel tank is a least half full and the battery is charged.
- Be aware of the symptoms of frostbite and hypothermia. Frostbite can occur within minutes when unprotected skin is exposed to very cold temperatures, causing the affected area to appear white or grayish-yellow in color and feel firm or waxy. Hypothermia is life-threatening, and occurs when the body temperature drops too low, causing shivering, drowsiness, clumsiness and confusion. Both require immediate medical treatment.
- Heat your home with devices approved for indoor use, and ensure they are properly vented to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning or fires. Never use wood-burning or coal-burning grills, camp stoves, or other outdoor devices indoors.
- Keep pets safe by bringing them inside and ensuring trips outside are brief.

**It is very important during cold weather to check on family members and neighbors who may be at risk for illness or injuries, especially young children, the elderly, and those with certain medical conditions.**

For further information, visit [www.milwaukee.gov/health](http://www.milwaukee.gov/health) or call (414) 286-CITY.

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*Think Health. Act Now!*

