

Weather...from Page 1A

the damage, first responders may have a delayed response reaching people's homes.

That's why it is important for people to be prepared in time, when the weather is fine or at the onset of a storm alert, for when the weather takes an unexpected turn for the worse.

The website www.Ready.gov is an excellent resource for emergency disaster preparedness, as it considers all kinds of disasters, including extreme winter weather.

Ready.gov begins its long list of preparedness recommendations by urging people to come up with a Family Communication Plan.

"Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so it is important to know how you will contact one another, how you will get back together and what you will do in case of an emergency," per the website.

The Ready.gov site also teaches people how to build and maintain a basic disaster supplies kit for at least three full days of self-sufficiency, with recommendations such as one gallon of water per person per day, for both drinking and sanitation.

Other items people should build into a basic disaster supplies kit include non-perishable foods to last at least three days, a battery

powered or hand-crank radio, a flashlight, a first-aid kit, extra batteries, prescription medications, blankets and more.

Ready.gov takes a deep dive into emergency preparedness, empowering people via a thorough breakdown of how to really dig in and use all resources fully.

People can learn how to prepare their homes for frigid conditions, and the website offers tips on keeping safe when heating homes with alternative heating sources, such as gas and firewood.

In addition to winterizing vehicles, i.e. checking all fluid levels and having a mechanic certify that cars are good to go, Ready.gov recommends people store an extra emergency kit



A giant Union County oak towers above a snow-covered field. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

created specifically for their vehicles.

"In addition to the basic essentials, consider adding a portable cell phone charger, ice scraper, extra blanket, sand for traction and jumper cables," per the website.

Continues the site: "If your home loses power or heat for more than a few hours or if you do not have adequate supplies to stay warm in your home overnight, you may want to go to a designated public shelter if you can get there safely.

"Text SHELTER + your ZIP code to 43362 (4FEMA) to find the nearest shelter in your

area (e.g., SHELTER30512 or SHELTER30546).

"Bring any personal items that you would need to spend the night (such as toiletries, medicines). Take precautions when traveling to the shelter. Dress warmly in layers, wear boots, mittens, and a hat."

Fortunately, both Towns and Union counties set up shelters over the weekend for residents hit hardest by Benji, and both counties offered to provide public transportation for those who couldn't make the journey on their own.

Check in with Facebook to the first responder agencies

in the area, which are good about updating residents concerning what's going on in their communities, especially during weather events.

For tons more information on winter safety and other types of emergency preparedness, please visit Ready.gov and carefully study the information therein – it just might save your life someday.



Getting the cold soldier... Photo/Shawn Jarrard



Photo/Frank Uhle