

NEWS FROM Legislator

# Lou D'Amaro



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For Immediate Release

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## Leg. D'Amaro and Suffolk County Department of Health Provide Information to Help Avoid Winter Hazards

*(HUNTINGTON STATION, NY... January 27, 2014)* – With the entire region currently in the midst of one of the worst winters in recent memory, Suffolk Legislator Lou D'Amaro and County Department of Health Services Commissioner Dr. James L. Tomarken, urge local residents to stay safe and take the following precautions:

### **Indoors:**

If you are turning up the heat or adding another source of heat, beware of fire and carbon monoxide hazards.

- Never run a generator in the home, garage or crawlspace. Opening doors and windows or using fans will NOT prevent carbon monoxide build-up in the home.
- When running a generator outdoors, keep it away from open windows and doors.
- Never burn charcoal in homes, tents, vehicles or garages.
- Never install or service combustion appliances without proper knowledge, skills, and tools.
- Never use a gas range, oven or dryer for heating.
- Keep everything at least three feet away from your stove or heater. Do not put anything that can burn on top of any heater.

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- Do NOT run a stove, heater, or fireplace at the same time there are vapors in the area from items such as paint or paint thinner.
- Never put foil on bottom of a gas oven because it interferes with combustion.
- Never operate an unvented gas-burning appliance in a closed room or in a room in which you are sleeping.
- Always unplug an electric heater when you are not using it or before you go to bed.
- Always have a working smoke alarm and battery or electric powered CO detector to alert you to dangerous levels of carbon monoxide in your home.
- Never leave a car running in a garage even with the garage door open.

**Residential Rental Heating Requirements:**

- Every dwelling is required to have heating facilities that are properly installed and maintained in working order. During the months between October 1 and May 31, the minimum temperature to be provided must be 68 degrees Fahrenheit whenever the outdoor temperature falls below 55 degrees. Tenants who wish to report noncompliance with these requirements may call the Suffolk County Department of Health Services at 631-852-5900.

**Outdoors:**

- Avoid traveling in low visibility or icy conditions. If you must drive, reduce your speed and try to stay on roads that have been plowed or salted/sanded. Leave a good amount of distance between your car and the one in front of you. Try to avoid sudden braking.
- If you must travel, let someone know your destination and when you expect to arrive.
- Dress in layers; wear a warm coat or jacket, hat, mittens and warm insulated boots.
- Charge your cell phone and keep it with you when you are outside.
- If you are stranded in your vehicle, stay in your vehicle and tie a brightly colored cloth to the antenna to signal first responders that you need help.
- Run the motor (and heater) for about 10 minutes per hour, opening one window slightly to let in air.
- Doing chores outside in difficult weather conditions can take a toll on your body. Be careful to avoid falling; when shoveling or digging out your car, take a break, and where possible, have a hot beverage. Do not overdo!

### **Persons with Special Needs**

The Suffolk County Emergency Preparedness Registry has been established to collect information emergency responders will need to help locate and evacuate people with Special Needs or high risks during an emergency, especially when a family, caregiver or others are unable to help. For more information visit:

[www.suffolkcountyny.gov/Departments/FireRescueandEmergencyServices/OfficeofEmergencyManagement/PeoplewithSpecialNeeds/JointEmergencyEvacuationProgram](http://www.suffolkcountyny.gov/Departments/FireRescueandEmergencyServices/OfficeofEmergencyManagement/PeoplewithSpecialNeeds/JointEmergencyEvacuationProgram)

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*Suffolk County Legislator Lou D'Amaro represents the 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative District, which includes parts of Huntington, Huntington Station, South Huntington, Melville, West Hills, Cold Spring Hills, Dix Hills, Deer Park, North Babylon and West Babylon. He is chairman of the Budget & Finance committee and a member of the Education & Information Technology and Human Services committees of the Suffolk County Legislature.*