

Prairie Fare: Winter Weather Vs. Your Skin, Who's Winning?

By Julie Garden-Robinson,
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NDSU Extension

"I just love it when it's twenty below!" said no one to me. Ever.

Many people enjoy winter activities such as skiing and snowmobiling. When brisk winds push the perceived temperature even lower, however, even the most enthusiastic outdoor adventurers retreat indoors. Many of my retired neighbors become snowbirds and head south for a few months.

I was thinking about those negative temperatures as I sat in my recliner, wrapped in a blanket, holding a warm dog, sipping tea and reaching for a back scratcher.

Unfortunately, my skin is paying the price for days spent in dry, heated air. We move from heated vehicles into the cold and back into heated buildings, often multiple times a day. Our skin, our body's largest organ, feels the effects of this constant moisture loss.

Skin is our first line of defense, and it consists of several layers that protect us from infection, injury and dehydration.

Most of us know how to dress for winter by wearing layers, hats, scarves and mittens. We also recognize the importance of a winter survival kit in our vehicles. But how often do we think about protecting our skin in other ways?

Your skin may send "I'm here!" reminders, such as sandpaper-like hands and heels or an itchy back begging for attention.

While a long, hot shower may feel comforting, dermatologists recommend shorter showers, about five to 10 minutes, using warm, not hot, water. Choose mild cleansers and apply thicker creams or petroleum jelly to hands and feet. Cotton gloves and socks worn overnight can help seal in moisture.

According to the American Academy of Dermatology, winter is also a good time to minimize products containing glycolic acid or retinol, as these ingredients can further dry or irritate skin. Apply moisturizer while skin is still damp to help trap moisture. Look for products that contain hyaluronic acid, glycerin, lanolin or shea butter.

Don't forget sunscreen in winter. Exposed skin, such as your nose and cheeks, can still be damaged by the sun's rays, even on cloudy days.

Nourish Skin from the Inside

Nutrition also plays a key role in maintaining healthy skin. A variety of foods helps meet nutrient needs and supports the body's protective barrier.

• Enjoy colorful fruits and vegetables daily for vitamins A and C.

• Obtain healthful fats from nuts, seeds, legumes, eggs, and olive, canola or peanut oil.

• Include omega-3-rich foods such as fatty fish, ground flaxseed and walnuts.

• Choose lean meats and other protein-rich foods to build and repair tissues.

• Consume whole grains for fiber and nutrients.

• Include calcium-rich foods such as dairy products.

Most people get more than eighty percent of their fluids from beverages, but foods also count. Fruits and vegetables are at least ninety percent water. Drink more water and fewer sweetened beverages. Alcohol can promote dehydration, puffiness, redness and dull-looking skin.

Keep water nearby as a reminder to sip regularly. Coffee counts toward fluid intake, although caffeine-free beverages may be more hydrating. If plain water isn't appealing, add cucumber slices, lemon or berries to a pitcher of water to boost flavor and encourage drinking.

Warm, nourishing meals also help on cold days. This hearty soup is rich in vegetables, fiber and fluids. While it has many ingredients, the results are worth the chopping.

Loaded Minestrone Soup

1 tablespoon olive oil or your favorite oil

1 small onion, diced
1 large carrot, chopped
2 celery stalks, chopped

4 garlic cloves, minced
½ medium zucchini, diced
1 (14.5-ounce) can fire-roasted tomatoes with juice

1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
1 (15.5-ounce) can kidney beans, drained and rinsed

1 tablespoon Italian seasoning
1 bay leaf

3 cups reduced-sodium vegetable broth (or chicken broth)

1 cup water
1 cup whole wheat small pasta
1½ cups spinach

Salt and pepper to taste

Parmesan cheese and fresh basil (optional)

In a large pot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onions, carrots and celery. Cook, stirring often for 5-7 minutes or until onions are translucent. Add garlic and cook for 30 seconds. Add all ingredients from through water into pot and cover. Bring to boil, reduce heat and cover. Simmer for 15 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Add pasta and cook until al dente. Remove from heat and take out bay leaf. Stir in spinach. Serve with Parmesan cheese and fresh basil if desired.

Makes eight servings. Each serving has 150 calories, 2.5 grams (g) fat, 25 g carbohydrate, 5 g fiber and 350 milligrams sodium.

NOTICE OF BIDS - MOUNTAIN COUNTY CULVERTS, CUTTING EDGES, LOADING & HAULING OF GRAVEL, CRUSHING & STOCKPILING OF AGGREGATE, SUB-GRADE REPAIRS, & APPLICATION OF DUST CONTROL PRODUCT

Notice is hereby given that sealed bids will be received until 10:00 A.M., Thursday, February 26, 2026 at the office of the Mountrail County Road and Bridge Department, 8103 61st Street NW, PO Box 275, Stanley, ND 58784 for (1) culverts, (2) cutting edges, (3) loading & hauling of gravel, crushing & stockpiling of aggregate, (4) subgrade repairs and (5) supply and application of calcium chloride, magnesium chloride or other approved dust control product; to be available to Mountrail County for a period of one year from the date of bid acceptance or until new bids are accepted.

The bid opening will be at 10:00 A.M. on Thursday, February 26, 2026 in the Conference Room, Mountrail County South Complex. Bids will be awarded at 10:00 A.M. on Tuesday, March 3, 2026 by the Board of Mountrail County Commissioners in the County Commissioner's Emergency Room, Mountrail County Justice Center.

Awards of bids shall be made throughout the year on the basis of need as dictated by the requirements of the Mountrail County Road and Bridge Department projects, both anticipated and unanticipated.

Bids will be accepted only on bidder's proposal forms and may be obtained from the Office of the Mountrail County Road & Bridge Department, phone (701) 628-2390 or via website at: <http://www.co.mountrail.nd.us/pages/road-and-bridge>

Bidders may bid on any or all bid categories. Bidders must enclose their proposals in separate envelopes for each category bid. Bidders must enclose their proposals in sealed envelopes and have endorsed them on the item bid on the front of the envelope. For example, "BID FOR CUTTING EDGES". For bid categories requiring additional documents (ie Contractors License or Insurance Certificate), documents must be in a separate sealed envelope, and attached to submitted bid, in accordance with ND Century Code 48-01-2.5.

Bid Submission Requirements for Cutting Edges and Culverts is a fully completed and executed sealed Bid, received on specified Bid Form. All items to be received PRIOR to bid opening.

Bid Submission Requirements for Gravel Hauling and Subgrade Repairs are (1) a fully completed and executed sealed Bid, received on specified Bid Form; (2) Copy of current North Dakota Contractors License; (3) Copy of current Liability Insurance, and (4) Copy of Noxious Weed-Free Certifications. Contractor's License and Insurance Certificate in a separate sealed envelope. All items to be received PRIOR to bid opening.

Bid Submission Requirements for Gravel Crushing are (1) a fully completed and executed sealed Bid, received on specified Bid Form; (2) Copy of current North Dakota Contractors License; (3) Copy of current Liability Insurance, and (4) Certified Check in the amount of \$500. Contractor's License, Insurance Certificate, and Certified check in a separate sealed envelope. All items to be received PRIOR to bid opening.

The Board of Mountrail County Commissioners reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive technicalities and to accept the bid or those bids which appear to be in the best interest of Mountrail County. The County reserves the right to hold all bids until the next regularly scheduled County Commission meeting to permit sufficient time to review all bids prior to acceptance or rejection. Bid award will be at the Mountrail County Justice Center, County Commissioner's / Emergency Room on Tuesday, March 3, 2026 at 10:00 A.M., located at 101 North Main Street, Stanley, ND 58784.

Given by order of the Board of Commissioners of Mountrail County, North Dakota, under my hand and seal this 20th day of January, 2026.

Trudy Ruland, Chairman
Mountrail County Board of Commission

Feb. 4, 11, 18, 2026

Dakota Datebook: The Groundhog And His Shadow

By Carole Butcher

As the calendar turned the page from 1940 to 1941, there was more than enough bad news in the papers. The front page of the Fargo Forum reported on the fighting in Europe, and the predictions were bleak. It seemed as if the countries of the world were falling like dominoes before the German Army. And Great Britain was fearful of worsening air attacks.

North Dakotans were aware of the fighting, and concerned about what the future would bring, but there was also positive news as folks were still able to take some joy amid the winter weather.

On February 2 in 1941, the groundhog saw his shadow, predicting six more weeks of winter, but rather than dwell on the length of the winter, plans were in the works for some fun. The Fargo Forum reported that the American Legion post was sponsoring a special eleven-car Northern Pacific train to take almost 300 people to the winter carnival in St. Paul. Another eight-car Great Northern train would carry 100 to the event.

For those who did not want to venture to Minnesota, there was plenty to do in North Dakota. Wahpeton's sixth annual winter festival featured twenty-six members of the new figure skating club in an exhibition and a competition. They were joined by members of the Fargo skating club. The Wahpeton Independents hockey team held a game against a team from Fergus Falls, and a snowman-building contest was scheduled. The city had collected Christmas trees and planned

to burn them in an evening bonfire.

In Enderlin, residents gathered for a hobby show attended by more than 500 people. Exhibits included carvings, paintings, ceramics, and a stamp collection. Local students provided music and performed a play.

Fargo citizens attended an event called "Get to Know Your Hockey," featuring a game at the Fargo Arena. The program was designed to promote the game of hockey, and cards explaining the rules were passed out to the audience. Ladies were admitted free, and gentlemen were encouraged to bring their wives or girlfriends with the promise that the action would surely give them a thrill.

The groundhog may have seen his shadow, and world headlines may have been grim, but that did not stop the hearty residents of North Dakota from enjoying winter in 1941.

NDFU Calls On USDA To Reverse Crop Insurance Decision

In comments submitted to USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA), North Dakota Farmers Union urged RMA to reinstate the "buy-up" option it eliminated for prevented planting crop insurance coverage. The option allowed producers to increase their prevented planting coverage by five percent in exchange for a higher insurance premium.

"RMA's decision to eliminate the buy-up option for producers was based on flawed analysis and should be reversed," said NDFU President Matt Perdue. "The buy-up option is an important risk management tool for producers in the Prairie Pothole Region, where we commonly face challenges with spring planting conditions."

In its decision, RMA said farm safety-net improvements and ad hoc disaster programs would provide sufficient protection to offset the elimination of the buy-up coverage. Perdue said ad hoc disaster programs are not guaranteed and research by North Dakota State University's Agricultural Risk Policy Center (ARPC) shows loss ratios for

the buy-up component are actuarially sound, with premiums sufficient to cover indemnities. Without prevented planting crop insurance, producers might experience losses between \$18 to \$26 for corn acres and \$14 to \$21 for soybean acres in years they cannot plant a crop, according to ARPC.

"RMA's justification that the buy-up option primarily benefits the Dakotas is also inaccurate," said Perdue. Farm Service Agency data for 2025 shows Arkansas reported the most unplanted acres at 889,366, followed by Mississippi (458,932), Kansas (426,932), North Dakota (382,994) and Texas (285,168).

"Unfortunately, the elimination of the buy-up option will go into effect for this year's crop," said Perdue, "which leaves producers unprotected if they have a wet spring that doesn't allow them to plant their crop."

USDA administers federal crop insurance through RMA and the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation.

PUBLIC NOTICES

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The Mountrail County Planning & Zoning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Monday, February 23rd, 2026 at 8:35 A.M.** via GOTOMEETING or in the Commissioners room in the Mountrail County Courthouse located at 101 North Main Street, Stanley, North Dakota, the public meeting is being held due to previous concerns from surrounding landowners. Regarding a temporary fresh water industrial use point of diversion application filed by Schenck LLC in concurrence with Brent & Kayla Wollschlager-Landowner. For a tract of land 155.43 acres more or less located in the SE ¼ Section 36, Township 152 North, Range 91 West (**Van Hook Township**).

The provision regarding a temporary fresh water industrial use point of diversion is contained within the Mountrail County Zoning Land Development Code. The Land Development Code may be viewed at the Mountrail County Planner's Office during office hours or online at www.co.mountrail.nd.us under the Planning & Zoning section.

If you are unable to attend the public hearing, written comments can be mailed to Mountrail County Planning & Zoning, PO Box 248, Stanley ND 58784-0248 and will be accepted until **Noon** on Friday, February 13th, 2026. Phone: 701-628-2909 or Email: melissav@co.mountrail.nd.us

Mountrail County complies with Title VI Nondiscrimination Standards and the Americans with Disabilities Act. These policies can be viewed at the Mountrail County Human Resources Office. If any special accommodations are required, please contact: Mountrail County Title VI Compliance & ADA Coordinator, Randi Schumaier, P.O. Box 69, Stanley, ND 58784-0069, phone: 701-628-8980, Fax: 701-628-2276, email: rschumaier@co.mountrail.nd.us

Feb. 23rd, 2026 P&Z meeting

Monday, February 23rd, 2026 8:30 AM

- 11:00 AM (America/Chicago)

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

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Dated at Stanley, North Dakota this 30th day of January, 2026.

Charlie Sorenson, Chairman

Planning & Zoning Commission

ATTEST:

Melissa Vachal

Planning & Zoning Administrator

Feb. 4, 11, 2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Mountrail County Planning & Zoning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Monday, February 23rd, 2026 at 8:41 A.M.** via GOTOMEETING or in the Commissioners room in the Mountrail County Courthouse located at 101 North Main Street, Stanley, North Dakota, for the purpose of receiving comments on a zoning/conditional use request filed by Sundre Sand & Gravel Inc-Applicant in concurrence with Glenn & Delores Lee-Landowners to use agricultural land to mine gravel on a tract of land 40.00 acres, more or less, located in the NW ¼ Section 25, Township 156 North, Range 89 West (**McGahan Township**).

The provision regarding a zoning/conditional use is contained within the Mountrail County Land Development Code. The Land Development Code may be viewed at the Mountrail County Planner's Office during office hours or online at www.co.mountrail.nd.us under the Planning & Zoning section.

If you are unable to attend the public hearing, written comments can be mailed to Mountrail County Planning & Zoning, PO Box 248, Stanley ND 58784-0248 and will be accepted until Noon on Friday, February 13th, 2026. Phone: 701-628-2909 or Email: melissav@co.mountrail.nd.us

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