

**2016/17 COLD WEATHER RESPONSE PLAN  
TYLER / SMITH COUNTY  
OCTOBER 24, 2016**

**PURPOSE**

This Cold Weather Response Plan is designed to serve as a guide and to provide useful information to the public. It includes tips on avoiding exposures as well as recognizing the signs and symptoms of cold weather-related emergencies. Additionally, it highlights resources that are available to the public during the winter months, including sheltering locations.

**RESPONSIBILITY / LEAD AGENCY**

The Tyler Fire Department is the lead agency for the Cold Weather Response Plan. Agencies or citizens needing information or administrative assistance should call the City of Tyler Fire Department at (903) 535-0005. After hours, or to report hazardous but *non-emergency* conditions, call either the Tyler Police Department at (903) 531-1000 or the Smith County Sheriff's Office at (903) 566-6600. For public affairs information call the Northeast Texas Public Health District at (903) 535-0020. Call 211 as an additional resource.

***..... AS ALWAYS, IN AN EMERGENCY, PLEASE CALL 911 .....***

**SCIENCE - HYPOTHERMIA**

When exposed to cold temperatures, your body begins to lose heat faster than it can be produced. Prolonged exposure to cold will eventually use up your body's stored energy. The result is hypothermia, or abnormally low body temperature. Body temperature that is too low affects the brain, making the victim unable to think clearly or move well. This makes hypothermia particularly dangerous because a person may not know it is happening and won't be able to do anything about it.

Hypothermia is most likely at very cold temperatures, but it can occur even at cool temperatures (above 40°F) if a person becomes chilled from rain, sweat, or submersion in cold water.

Victims of hypothermia are often:

- Elderly people with inadequate food, clothing, or heating; lower metabolic rate might prevent them from maintaining normal body temperatures when temperatures fall below 64.4°F
- Babies sleeping in cold bedrooms
- People who remain outdoors for long periods - the homeless, hikers, hunters, etc.
- People who drink alcohol or use illicit drugs.

From 1991 to 2011, a total of 16,911 deaths in the United States, an average of 1,301 per year, were associated with exposure to excessive natural cold. The highest annual total of hypothermia-related deaths (1,536) was in 2010 and the lowest (1,058) was in 2006. Approximately 67% of hypothermia-related deaths was among males.

**Source:** National Vital Statistics System. Mortality public use data files, 1999-2010. Available at [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data\\_access/vitalstatsonline.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data_access/vitalstatsonline.htm)

## **SCIENCE - FROSTBITE**

Frostbite is an injury to the body that is caused by freezing. Frostbite causes a loss of feeling and color in affected areas. It most often affects the nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, or toes. Frostbite can permanently damage the body, and severe cases can lead to amputation. The risk of frostbite is increased in people with reduced blood circulation and among people who are not dressed properly for extremely cold temperatures.

At the first signs of redness or pain in any skin area, get out of the cold or protect any exposed skin - frostbite may be beginning. Any of the following signs may indicate frostbite:

- A white or grayish-yellow skin area
- Skin that feels unusually firm or waxy
- Pins and needles, followed by numbness
- Red and extremely painful skin and muscle as the area thaws

***NOTE: Victims are often unaware of frostbite until someone else points it out because frozen tissues are numb in and near the affected area.***

If you detect symptoms of frostbite, seek medical care. Because frostbite and hypothermia both result from exposure, first determine whether there are signs of hypothermia, as described previously. Hypothermia is a more serious medical condition and requires immediate emergency medical assistance.

If there is frostbite but no sign of hypothermia and immediate medical care is not available, proceed as follows:

- Get into a warm room as soon as possible.
- Unless absolutely necessary, do not walk on frostbitten feet or toes - this increases the damage.
- Immerse the affected area in warm - not hot - water (the temperature should be comfortable to the touch for unaffected parts of the body).
- Warm the affected area using body heat. The armpit can be used to warm frostbitten fingers.
- Do not rub the frostbitten area with snow or massage it at all. This can cause more damage.
- Do not use a heating pad, heat lamp, or the heat of a stove, fireplace, or radiator for warming. Affected areas are numb and can be easily burned.

## Windchill Table

■ As wind speed increases, your body loses heat more rapidly, making the air feel colder than it really is. The combination of cold temperature and high wind can create a cooling effect so severe that exposed flesh can freeze.

		TEMPERATURE (°F)														
		35	30	25	20	15	10	5	0	-5	-10	-15	-20	-25	-30	-35
WIND SPEED (mph)	Calm	31	25	19	13	7	1	-5	-11	-16	-22	-28	-34	-40	-46	-52
	5	27	21	15	9	3	-4	-10	-16	-22	-28	-35	-41	-47	-53	-59
	10	25	19	13	6	0	-7	-13	-19	-26	-32	-39	-45	-51	-58	-64
	15	24	17	11	4	-2	-9	-15	-22	-29	-35	-42	-48	-55	-61	-68
	20	23	16	9	3	-4	-11	-17	-24	-31	-37	-44	-51	-58	-64	-71
	25	22	15	8	1	-5	-12	-19	-26	-33	-39	-46	-53	-60	-67	-73
	30	21	14	7	0	-7	-14	-21	-27	-34	-41	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76
	35	20	13	6	-1	-8	-15	-22	-29	-36	-43	-50	-57	-64	-71	-78
	40	19	12	5	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-44	-51	-58	-65	-72	-79
	45	19	12	4	-3	-10	-17	-24	-31	-38	-45	-52	-60	-67	-74	-81
	50	18	11	4	-3	-11	-18	-25	-32	-39	-46	-54	-61	-68	-75	-82
	55	18	11	4	-3	-11	-18	-25	-32	-39	-46	-54	-61	-68	-75	-82
60	17	10	3	-4	-11	-19	-26	-33	-40	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-84	

Frostbite occurs in  30 minutes  10 minutes  5 minutes

**EXAMPLE:** When the temperature is 15°F and the wind speed is 30 miles per hour, the windchill, or how cold it feels, is -5°F. For a Celsius version of this table, visit [Almanac.com/WindchillCelsius](http://Almanac.com/WindchillCelsius).

*—courtesy National Weather Service*

### WATCHES, WARNINGS, AND ADVISORIES

Monitor local and national weather channels and stations and reliable social media. Be alert to changing conditions.

**Watch:** Issued in the 24 to 72 hour forecast time frame when the risk of a hazardous winter weather event has increased (50 to 80% certainty that warning thresholds will be met). It is intended to provide enough lead time so those who need to set their plans in motion can do so.

- **Wind Chill Watch:** Conditions are favorable for wind chill temperatures to meet or exceed local wind chill warning criteria in the next 24 to 72 hours. Wind chill temperatures may reach or exceed -25°F.
- **Winter Storm Watch:** Conditions are favorable for a winter storm event (heavy sleet, ice storm, heavy snow and blowing snow or a combination of events) to meet or exceed local winter storm warning criteria in the next 24 to 72 hours. Criteria for snow is 7" more in 12 hours or less, or 9" or more in 24 hours covering at least 50% of the zone or encompassing most of the population. Criteria for ice is ½" or more over at least 50% of the zone or encompassing most of the population.

**Warning:** Issued when a hazardous winter weather event is occurring, is imminent, or has a very high probability of occurrence (generally greater than 80%). A warning is used for conditions posing a threat to life or property.

- **Ice Storm Warning:** An ice storm event is expected to meet or exceed local ice storm warning criteria in the next 12 to 36 hours. Criteria for ice is ½" or more over at least 50 percent of the zone or encompassing most of the population.
- **Wind Chill Warning:** Wind chill temperatures are expected to meet or exceed local wind chill warning criteria in the next 12 to 36 hours. Wind chill temperatures may reach or exceed -25°F.
- **Winter Storm Warning:** A winter storm (heavy sleet, ice storm, snow or blowing snow, or a combination of events) is expected to meet or exceed local winter storm warning criteria in the next 12 to 36 hours. Criteria for snow is 7" or more in 12 hours or less, or 9" or more in 24 hours covering at least 50% of the zone or encompassing most of the population.

**Advisory:** Issued when a hazardous winter weather event is occurring, is imminent, or has a very high probability of occurrence (generally greater than 80%). An advisory is for less serious conditions that cause significant inconvenience and, if caution is not exercised, could lead to situations that may threaten life and/or property.

- **Winter Weather Advisory:** A winter storm event (sleet, freezing rain, snow and blowing snow, or a combination of events) is expected to meet or exceed local winter weather advisory criteria in the next 12 to 36 hours but stay below warning criteria. Criteria for snow is 4" or more in 12 hours covering at least 50% of the zone or encompassing most of the population.
- **Freezing Rain Advisory:** Any accumulation of freezing rain is expected in the next 12 to 36 hours (but will remain below ½") for at least 50 percent of the zone or encompassing most of the population.
- **Wind Chill Advisory:** Wind chill temperatures are expected to meet or exceed local wind chill advisory criteria in the next 12 to 36 hours. Wind chill temperatures may reach or exceed -15°F.

## **PRECAUTIONS**

Dressing properly is extremely important in preventing cold stress. The type of fabric worn also makes a difference. Cotton loses its insulation value when it becomes wet. Wool, silk and most synthetics, on the other hand, retain their insulation even when wet. The following are recommendations for working in cold environments:

- Do not wear tight fitting clothing.
  - Wear at least three layers of loose fitting clothing. Layering provides better insulation.
    - An inner layer of wool, silk or synthetic to keep moisture away from the body.
    - A middle layer of wool or synthetic to provide insulation even when wet.
    - Outer wind/rain protection layer that allows ventilation to prevent overheating.

- Wear a hat or hood reduce the amount of body heat that escapes from your head.
- Use a knit mask to cover the face and mouth (if needed).
- Use insulated gloves to protect the hands (water resistant if necessary).
- Wear insulated and waterproof boots (or other footwear).

### **SAFETY TIPS FOR THE HOME**

- Exercise caution when using space heaters.
- Do not heat your home with a gas range or oven or outdoor cooking appliances.
- Have your heating systems and fireplaces inspected by a licensed professional.
- Do not place a heating device within 3 feet of anything that might catch fire.
- During a power outage, use flashlights rather than candles.
- Use only approved extension cords of sufficient size.
- Exercise caution with Holiday decorations, including trees and candles.
- Install and maintain smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Change the battery twice a year.
- Do not run a motorized vehicle inside an attached garage. This could lead to elevated levels of carbon monoxide that could enter your living quarters.
- Have a battery powered radio or NOAA Weather Radio
- Have an emergency kit which includes a flashlight, extra batteries, a first aid kit, blankets, and enough food and water for one week per person.

### **SAFETY TIPS FOR WORKERS**

- Know the symptoms of cold stress.
- Monitor your physical condition and that of your coworkers.
- Dress properly for the cold.
- Stay dry. Moisture and dampness can increase the rate of heat loss from the body.
- Keep extra clothing (including underwear) handy in case you get wet and need to change.
- Drink warm sweetened fluids (no alcohol).
- Use proper engineering controls, safe work practices, and personal protective equipment (PPE) provided by your employer.

### **SAFETY TIPS FOR TRAVELING**

- Maintain a full tank of fuel.
- Check the forecast.
- Travel only when necessary.
- Have the charging system checked.
- Have the radiator system serviced.
- Replace windshield wiper fluid with a wintertime mixture.
- Replace worn tires and check the air pressure.
- Carry extra boots, gloves, hats, scarves, and warm clothes.
- Carry a survival kit consisting of blankets, flash light, extra batteries, first aid kit, water, high calorie canned or dried foods, such as unsalted canned nuts, dried fruit, and hard candy, and a can opener, and a brightly colored cloth or flagging device or flares.
- Carry a mobile phone and a charger.

## **SAFETY TIPS FOR PETS**

- If it's too cold for you, it's too cold for your pets.
- Bring pets inside when temperatures are dropping.
- If they cannot come inside, provide adequate warm, dry, and draft free shelter.
- Provide access to water that is protected from freezing
- Provide plenty of high calorie food.
- Protect pets from exposure to antifreeze. Even small amounts can be deadly.

## **MEDICAL EVALUATION**

Individuals at risk for hypothermia can call 911 for a medical evaluation. Paramedics will respond to identify any problems and provide transport to the appropriate medical facility in the event of an emergency.

## **SHELTERS**

### **Overnight Locations:**

- Salvation Army - 24 hour shelter for homeless or near homeless with a capacity of 200. (903) 592-4361. In case of declared emergency, additional space for 250 is available in the Disaster Shelter
- American Red Cross - Open on demand. Depends on declared emergency. (903) 581-7981 or 1-866-505-4801

### **Daytime Locations:**

- Medical Facilities including local hospitals, clinics, and stand-alone emergency rooms.
- Salvation Army 633 N. Broadway, Open 24 hours, 7 days a week, (903) 592-4361
- Local Fire Stations Check with individual facilities regarding activities and accommodations
- Broadway Square Mall and other retail outlets On City bus route
- Hiway 80 Rescue Mission 601 E. Valentine (903) 617-6097 or (903) 216-9183 8:30am-11:30am and 1:00pm – 4:00pm
- Movie Theatres Check with individual facilities regarding activities and accommodations
- Churches Check with individual facilities regarding activities and accommodations
- Schools On hold at this time. Depends on a declared emergency and whether school is in session

### **City of Tyler Facilities:**

- Tyler Fire Department Various locations. Call 903-535-0005 or 911
- Glass Recreation Center 501 W. 32nd St., Monday through Friday 7am-10pm, Saturday 9am-3pm, closed Sunday. Open to the public during posted hours with estimated capacity of 500 individuals. Activities can be scheduled by calling (903) 595-7271

- Tyler Public Library 201 S. College. Monday through Thursday 10am-7pm, Friday 10am-6pm, Saturday 10am-5pm, Sunday 1pm-5pm. Open to the public during posted hours with an estimated capacity of 120 individuals. Activities can be scheduled through the library for Taylor Auditorium (capacity 100) by calling (903) 593-7323
- Senior Citizen Activity Center: 1915 Garden Valley Road, (903) 597-0781 for additional information about services, 8am to 5pm Monday through Friday, estimated capacity 125
- Rose Garden 420 Rose Park Drive, (903) 531-1349, 8am-5pm. Monday through Friday with an estimated capacity 200

**Arp:** Arp Fire Department, 12125 County Road 246S

**Bullard:** Bullard Fire Department, 215 S Houston St

**Chapel Hill:** Chapel Hill Fire Department, 13801 County Road 220

**Dixie:** Dixie Fire Department, 584 County Road 1143

**Flint/Gresham:** Flint-Gresham Fire Department, 18823 FM 2493

**Jackson Heights:** Jackson Heights Fire Department, 2874 County Road 24

**Lindale:** Lindale Fire Department, 208 E Hubbard St

Lindale Community Library, 200 E. Hubbard (903) 882-1900. Capacity 200-300  
Air conditioned and open to the public during posted hours  
Tuesday through Thursday 10am-6pm,  
Friday through Saturday 10:00am-4:00pm. Closed Sunday & Monday

**Noonday:** Noonday Fire Department, 16619 Highway 155S

**Overton:** Overton Fire Department, 201 E Main St

Overton McMillan Memorial Library, 302 E. South St,  
(903) 834-6318, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 8am-5pm,  
Thursday 10am-7pm, Friday 8am-5pm, closed Saturday & Sunday

**Red Springs:** Red Springs Fire Department, 16759 FM 14

**Troup:** Troup Fire Department, 204 Wilkinson

**Whitehouse:** Whitehouse Fire Department, 20510 Hwy 110 South

Whitehouse Community Library, 107 Bascom Road (903) 839 2949

Whitehouse Community YMCA, 301 Terry St. (903) 839 9622

**Winona:** Winona Fire Department, 1111 Dallas St

## **TRANSPORTATION:**

Transportation for at-risk individuals enroute to heated shelters or daytime locations might be available through the following agencies. Please contact the individual agency for availability.

- Family, Friends, Neighbors
- Tyler Transit
- Hospital courtesy vans
- Cab companies

## **IDENTIFICATION OF ISOLATED/ELDERLY AT RISK INDIVIDUALS**

The following should make effort to identify those who are at risk and to get them connected to transportation and heat. Remember, many do not have telephone or internet access.

- Family, Friends, Neighbors
- Local Fire Departments
- Police and Sherriff's Departments (especially beat officers)
- Neighborhood Crime Watch
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- Meals on Wheels
- Senior Citizen Centers
- Emergency Care Centers/Emergency Rooms
- Hospital Social Workers
- Home Health Nurses and Agencies
- Public Health Case Managers/Outreach Workers
- Animal Control Officers
- Church Volunteers
- Citizen Volunteers
- East Texas Council For Independent Living - particularly for disabled residents

## **WELFARE CONCERN:**

Should a concern exist, please contact one of the following:

- Tyler Police and Tyler Fire Department (903) 531-1000 to request a welfare visit
- Smith County Emergency Dispatch / Fire Department and Sheriff's Office (903) 566-6600
- Lindale Emergency Dispatch / Fire and Police (903) 882-3313
- **FOR EMERGENCIES, CALL 911**

## **PUBLIC AFFAIRS NETWORK/HOTLINE:**

Provide information to the public about what they should do, some general information on avoiding cold weather related illness, and where to go for relief from the cold.

- Northeast Texas Public Health District (903) 535-0020 [www.healtheasttx.org](http://www.healtheasttx.org)
- City of Tyler Access Channel (903) 533-7444 Web Site @ [www.cityoftyler.org](http://www.cityoftyler.org)
- 2-1-1 Texas [www.211texas.org](http://www.211texas.org)
- Ready.Gov [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- Christus Trinity Mother Frances Hospital (903) 593-8441
- ETMC Hospital (903) 597-0351

- UT Health Northeast at Tyler Emergency Room (903) 877-7806
- United Way [www.uwtyler.org](http://www.uwtyler.org)
- Salvation Army (903) 592-4361 [www.salvationarmytexas.org/tyler](http://www.salvationarmytexas.org/tyler)
- American Red Cross, [www.redcross.org/tx/longview-tyler](http://www.redcross.org/tx/longview-tyler) or [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).
  - Apps available through smartphone app store.
- Tyler Morning Telegraph (903) 596-6265
- KTBB 97.5 FM / KRWR 92.1 FM (903) 593-2519
- KETK NBC56 (903) 581-5656
- KLTV Channel 7 (903) 510-7777
- KYTX CBS19 (903) 581-2211
- Alpha Media Group KOYE (LaInvasora) 96.7 FM, KKUS 104.1 FM, KYKX 105.7 FM, KOOI 106.5 FM, Sports AM 1370, 903-581-9966
- Town Square Media KTYL 93.1 FM, KKTX 96.1 FM, KNUE 101.5 FM, KISX 107.3, 903-581-0606
- Reynolds Radio MegaFM 99.3, The Blaze 102.7/106.9 FM
- Other Media (see telephone book)

### **POWER LINE / TREE LIMB ISSUES**

To report electrical / power line issues or a tree limb concerns, call Oncor at (888) 313-6862 or visit the website at <http://www.askoncor.com/>.

### **HAZARDOUS STREETS**

To report hazardous street conditions in the City of Tyler, call (903) 535-1000. In Smith County call (903) 566-6600

### **UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS:**

Individuals with problems concerning payment should contact their utility company to develop a payment plan if needed. Agencies that may assist with temporary utility bill assistance include:

- Greater East Texas Community Action Program (GETCAP) (903) 592-3828 or (800) 621-5746 or [www.get-cap.org](http://www.get-cap.org).
- PATH Call for information, 903-597-PATH (7284) or visit [www.pathhelps.org](http://www.pathhelps.org)
- Local Churches Call for information

### **DONATIONS:**

To donate water, blankets, heaters, and transportation services, contact:

- Tyler Fire Department (903) 535-0005
- People Attempting To Help (PATH) (903) 597-4044
- Salvation Army (903) 592-4361
- Meals on Wheels (903) 593-7385
- KLTV Channel 7 (903) 510-7777
- KETK NBC56 (903) 581-5656
- KYTX CBS19 (903) 581-2211
- Smith County ESD #2 and Volunteer Fire Departments (903) 590-2655

**REPORTING SYSTEMS:**

Emergency Rooms and EMS Providers keep records of the number of cold weather related injuries and illnesses in order to allow monitoring of the community and to permit future development of Cold Weather Response Plans. This is coordinated by Texas Department of Health EMS staff.

**USERS OF THIS PLAN:**

Users of this plan are encouraged to direct questions to the above identified agencies. Should issues not be addressed in the plan, or if questions remain unanswered, users should contact the lead agency.

**REVIEWED:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Les. R. Schminkey**  
**Interim Fire Chief**  
**Emergency Management Coordinator**  
**City of Tyler, TX**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**George Roberts**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Northeast Texas Public Health District**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Connie McCoy-Wasson**  
**Fire Marshal**  
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**Smith County, Texas**