

Saskatoon Extreme Cold Weather Emergency Response Plan

ISSUE

This report will provide information on the Saskatoon Extreme Cold Weather Emergency Response Plan, including current supports that the City Administration has in place within jurisdictional responsibility.

BACKGROUND

In December 2012, the United Way of Saskatoon and Area convened providers to those individuals in Saskatoon experiencing homelessness. This included emergency shelters, health and emergency services agencies, police, and housing providers. This group developed the Cold Weather Strategy (CWS) for Saskatoon. In recent years, Saskatoon Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) had led the CWS. The City of Saskatoon has been a partner in this work since 2012.

CURRENT STATUS

Saskatoon Emergency Management Organization (EMO) met with SHIP and City of Saskatoon Planning and Development staff on September 12, 2022. At that time, it was determined that the Saskatoon EMO would assume leadership of the coordination for the CWS. The previous CWS has been added as an annex to Saskatoon's Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) under the title "Saskatoon Extreme Cold Weather Emergency Response Plan" (the Plan).

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

EMO leads the coordination of complex emergency planning in Saskatoon. This includes creating, maintaining, and exercising plans for a variety of hazards that occur in Saskatoon. EMO engages subject matter experts as members of the planning, response, and recovery process. An advisory group of subject matter experts guided the development of the Plan consisting of representatives from:

- City of Saskatoon Communications and Public Engagement,
- Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC),
- Metis Nation of Saskatchewan,
- Ministry of Social Services,
- SHIP,
- Saskatchewan Health Authority,
- EMO,
- Saskatoon Police Service,
- Saskatoon Tribal Council, and
- The Salvation Army.

Members of the Plan believe that ensuring all residents in Saskatoon have access to a safe location during extreme cold is the responsibility of all. Working together, we can provide a whole community approach to enhance supports for those who are experiencing homelessness.

Cold weather in Saskatoon is a routine occurrence. This response is intended for use during extreme winter weather. In Saskatoon member agencies work to provide options for those who are homeless through regular operations of outreach services, emergency shelters, and access to emergency social services. Homelessness is a complex issue that requires multi-sector planning with a client centered trauma informed approach. The Plan is one process in the overall community-wide coordinated approach to deliver services.

All member agencies of the Plan have had the opportunity to review drafts and provide feedback. Members have agreed upon the triggers, actions, and membership in the plan. After each activation, an after-action review process will occur. In April of each year, an over-all after-action review will occur. This will provide information for updating the Plan for the following year.

While developing the Plan, since September 13, 2022, key actions have included:

- Review of previous CWS Plans,
- Consultations with other municipalities regarding Cold Weather Emergency Plans,
- Meetings with the Plan's Advisory Group,
- An EMO "Winter-Weather Update" learning opportunity for all members with an ECCC Warning Preparedness Meteorologist,
- Discussions with the Saskatoon Inter-Agency Response Committee Executive Directors,
- Coordinated meetings,
- An EMO facilitated meeting for all members with information regarding an opportunity for expressions of interest for the Federal Government's Reaching Home Funding through SHIP,
- Development of a [Warming Location poster/resource](#) (poster will be updated as new locations are identified),
- Opportunities for all members to provide feedback on development of the Plan, and
- Development of a page on the City of Saskatoon website saskatoon.ca/cold.

Since creation of the Plan, there have been two "Level I – Elevated Activations" due to forecasts of 10 cm of snow or more falling within 12 hours or less and two after-action reviews.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications at this time.

NEXT STEPS

Saskatoon EMO will continue to work with the advisory group, and all members of the Plan, for continuous review and updating.

APPENDICES

1. Saskatoon Extreme Cold Weather Emergency Response Plan
2. Warming Location Poster
3. Municipal Scan of Cold Weather Response

Report Approval

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