

COLD WEATHER PLAN

Anderson County

To include Cities of Palestine, Elkhart, and Frankston

This plan can be accessed at the following links:

<https://www.co.anderson.tx.us/page/anderson.Emergency>

<https://www.cityofpalestinetx.com/>

<https://cityofelkharttx.gov/>

<https://www.frankstontexas.com/>

PURPOSE

This Cold Weather Response Plan is designed to serve as a **GUIDE** to provide useful information to the public. It includes tips on avoiding exposure 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. We strongly encourage residents to prepare ahead of possible cold weather and to have a plan for the cold weather conditions.

RESPONSIBILITY / LEAD AGENCY

The Anderson County Cold Weather Plan is a combined effort of Anderson County Office of Emergency Management, Cities of Palestine, Elkhart, and Frankston.

Agencies or citizens needing information or administrative assistance during business hours should call:

Anderson County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) at 903-723-7813

City of Palestine Fire Department at 903-729-7100

City of Elkhart at 903-764-5657

City of Frankston at 903-876-2241

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

SCIENCE - HYPOTHERMIA

When exposed to cold temperatures, your body begins to lose heat faster than can be produced. Prolonged exposure to cold will eventually use up your body's stored energy. The result is hypothermia, a condition brought on when the body temperature drops below 90 degrees F. 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.

Symptoms of Hypothermia are:

- Uncontrollable shivering
- Slow speech
- Memory lapses
- Frequent stumbling
- Drowsiness
- Exhaustion

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 where 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.

TREATMENT

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 frostbite or hypothermia is suspected, begin warming the person slowly and seek immediate medical help. Warm the person's trunk first. Arms and legs should be warmed last because stimulation of the limbs can drive cold blood towards the heart and lead to heart failure. Put the victim in dry clothing and wrap his or her entire body in a blanket. If no other treatment is available, use your own body heat to help raise the victims core temperature or warm frost-bitten extremities.

Never give a frostbite or hypothermia victim caffeine (coffee or tea). Caffeine, a stimulant, can cause the heart to beat faster and speed up the effects cold has on the body. Alcohol, a depressant, can slow the heart and speed up the effects of cold body temperature.

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 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.

WATCHES, ADVISORIES, AND WARNINGS

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.

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.

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	17	10	3	-4	-11	-19	-26	-33	-40	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-84
	60															

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.

—courtesy National Weather Service

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.

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.
 - Wearing 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 protective 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 or generator inside a garage or enclosed building. This could lead to elevated levels of carbon monoxide that could enter your living quarters.
- Insulate walls and attics.
- Caulk and weather strip the doors and windows.
- Install storm windows or cover windows with plastic from the inside.
- Insulate pipes from freezing by wrapping pipes in insulation or layers of old newspapers and wrap the newspaper with plastic to keep out moisture; let faucets drip a little to avoid freezing; know how to shut off water supply valves; keep proper tools nearby to perform this task.
- Consider acquiring emergency heating equipment.
- Consider purchasing a generator in case your electrical service is interrupted. **Never operate powered generators inside the home and have qualified personnel connect your generator to your residential power supply.**
- Survival techniques may become necessary. Think outside of the box concerning other places to obtain water if needed. e.g., bathroom storage tanks, water heaters, melting snow, filling bathtubs and other containers.
- Check the batteries in your flashlights, NOAA Weather Radio, cell phones and other portable devices prior to the storm.
- Assemble a disaster supply kit and make a family communication plan. An emergency kit should include a flashlight, extra batteries, a first aid kit, blankets, and enough food and

water for one week per person. **Go to: [Ready.gov](#) for more information.**

- Prepare a plan and store supplies for the winter months: Important items may include rock salt, sand, shovels, snow shovel, heating fuel, extra clothes, candles, matches, pet supplies, blankets, etc.

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 and treat diesel with an anti-gel mixture. Apply engine block heaters, if equipped.
 - Check the weather forecast.
 - Travel only when necessary and plan long trips carefully.
 - Make sure your vehicle is in good operating condition. Winterize your vehicle by checking key components and servicing the cooling and charging systems.
 - Replace windshield wiper fluid with a wintertime mixture. Also, keep a windshield scraper and small broom for snow and ice removal.
 - Replace worn tires and check the air pressure. Install winter tires and snow chains as necessary.
 - Avoid driving on overpasses and bridges – they often freeze more quickly than roads.
 - Carry extra boots, gloves, hats, scarves, and warm clothes.
 - Carry a mobile phone, phone charger and a backup power supply as needed.
 - Listen to the radio or call the Department of Public Safety for the latest road conditions. As much as possible, travel during daylight hours and carry a companion. If alone, keep others informed of your schedule. Go to <https://drivetexas.org/> for information as well.
 - Use public transportation, when feasible.
 - Carry a survival/emergency kit consisting of blankets, flashlight, extra batteries, first aid kit, water, high calorie canned or dried foods such as unsalted canned nuts, dried fruit, hard candy, a can opener, and a brightly colored cloth or flagging device or flares.
- Go to: [Ready.gov](#) for more information.**

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.

ACTIONS TO CONSIDER AFTER A WINTER STORM

- Check on family, friends and neighbors and notify them as to your condition.
- Phone lines could be overwhelmed or damaged from the storm. Keep conversations short and concise.
- Monitor local media for the latest information.
- Help people who may need special assistance (e.g., the elderly and people with access and functional needs).
- If you need shelter, call 211, American Red Cross, or text SHELTER + your zip code to **4FEMA (43362)** to find the nearest shelter.

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:

- American Red Cross - Open on demand. Depends on declared emergency. 903-581-7981 or 1-866-505-4801

Daytime Locations (to temporarily get out of the cold weather):

- Movie Theatre Check with individual facility regarding activities and accommodations
- Churches Check with individual facilities regarding activities and accommodations
- Fast Food restaurants (may have to purchase an item)

City of Palestine Facilities:

- Palestine Fire Department call for available shelter locations only. Call 903-729-7100
- Palestine Public Library 502 North Queen Street, Monday through Friday 10am-6pm, Saturday 10am-1pm, Sunday closed. Open to the public during posted hours with an estimated. 903-729-4121
- Palestine City Hall 504 N Queen St, Monday through Friday 9am-5pm 903-731-8400
- Palestine Senior Citizen Activity Center sand Meals on Wheels: 200 N Church St, 903-729-0612 for additional information about services, Monday through Friday 8am to 4pm
- Hope Station 919 S Magnolia St. open Mondays 10am-3pm and Tuesday-Thursday 9am-3pm, 903-723-2930

City of Elkhart Facilities:

- Elkhart Fire Department call for available shelter locations only. Call 903-724-4641

City of Frankston Facilities:

- Frankston Fire Department call for available shelter locations only. Call 903-941-2063
- Frankston Depot Library 159 W. Railroad St., Tuesday/Thursday/Saturday 9am-5pm, closed Monday/Wednesday/Friday/Sunday. Open to the public during posted hours. 903-876-4463

Warming Centers:

- There are several daytime warming centers that can be available upon demand in the event of severe weather. These will be shared on County/City web pages, social media, and local radio if opened. Hours vary depending upon staffing and availability.

TRANSPORTATION:

Transportation for at-risk individual's enroute to heated shelters or daytime locations will need to rely on **Family, Friends, and Neighbors**. There are transportation services available in the county or cities.

IDENTIFICATION OF ISOLATED/ELDERLY AT RISK INDIVIDUALS

The following should make an effort to identify those who are at risk and to get them the information available for facilities that may be open. Remember, may 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)
- Senior Citizen Centers/ Meals on Wheels
- 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
- Palestine Resource Center for Independent Living - particularly for disabled residents

WELEARE CONCERN:

Should a concern exist, please contact one of the following to request a welfare visit:

- Anderson County Sheriff's Office 903-729-6068
- Palestine Police 903-729-2254
- Frankston Police 903-876-2400
- People with disabilities such as access and functional needs, including limited mobility, communication barriers, transportation assistance, personal care, and special medical assistance, can register with the **State of Texas Emergency Assistance Register (STEAR)-Public**. <https://www.dps.texas.gov/dem/stear/public.htm>. (** Registering yourself in the STEAR registry **DOES NOT** guarantee that you will receive a specific service during an emergency**)
- If you do not have access to the internet, you can register for **STEAR** over the phone by dialing **211**.
- The **Anderson County OEM** is the **Lead Agency's** for the **State of Texas Emergency Assistance Register (STEAR)-Public** within Anderson County.
- Sign up for **RAVE (emergency)** alerts. Palestine and Anderson County use Smart 911 to issue RAVE Alerts through their partnership with the ETCOG.
 - City of Palestine residents:
<https://www.smart911.com/smart911/registration/registrationLanding.action?cdnExternalPath=>
 - or click on the Rave link at <https://www.cityofpalestinetx.com/201/Emergency-Management>
 - Anderson County residents:
<https://www.smart911.com/smart911/registration/registrationLanding.action?cdnExternalPath=>
 - or click on the Rave link at <https://www.co.anderson.tx.us/page/anderson.Emergency>

• **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.

- 2-1-1 Texas at United Way www.211texas.org
- American Red Cross 903-581-7981 www.redcross.org/tx/easttexas
- ETex Radio Group: KYK 98.3 FM, KNET AM 1450 & K239AM 95.7 FM 903-729-6077
- KETK NBC56 903-581-5656 newsroom@ketk.com
- KLTV Channel 7 903-510-7777 newsroom@kltv.com
- KYTX CBS19 903-581-2211 sjackson@cbs19.tv
- Palestine Herald Press 903-729-0281, pwebb@palestineherald.com
- KTBB AM600/KRWR 92.1 FM (903) 593-2519, jsims@ktbb.com
- Alpha Media Group: KOYE (La Invasora) 96.7 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: Mega FM 99.3, The Blaze 102.7/106.9 FM 903-581-5259
- Other Media (see telephone book)

RESIDENTIAL GAS COMPANIES

To report any residential gas issues or concerns, call:

- ATMO Gas Service 1-866-322-8667 to report a natural gas emergency (24/7)
- Center Point Energy 1-800-259-5544 to report a natural gas emergency (24/7)

POWER LINE / TREE LIMB ISSUES

To report electrical / power line issues or a tree on power line concerns, call:

- ONCOR 1-888-313-4747 to report down lines, power outages (24/7)
- Trinity Valley Electric Coop 1-800-967-9324 to report down lines, power outage (24/7)
- Houston County Electric Coop 1-800-970-4232 to report down lines, power outages (24/7)

HAZARDOUS STREETS

To report hazardous street conditions or trees on county roadways:

- Anderson County call Commissioners Offices:
 - Pct. 1 barn: 903-764-2646
 - Pct. 2 barn: 903-723-7480
 - Pct. 3 barn: 903-876-2891
 - Pct. 4 barn: 903-549-2495

** after business hours call Anderson County Sheriff's Office non-emergency number 903-729-6068

To report hazardous street conditions or trees on city or state roadways:

- Palestine Public Works 903-731-8423 after hours call non-emergency number 903-729-2254
- Frankston Public Works 903-876-3887 after hours call non-emergency number 903-574-4839
- Elkhart Public Works 903-764-5657 after hours call non-emergency number 430-800-1935
- TxDot (State Highway & Farm to Market (FM) roads) 800-558-9368

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) 936-564-2491 or 903-581-2310 or 800-621-5746 or www.get-cap.org.
- PATH Call for information, 903-597-PATH (7284) or visit www.pathhelps.org
- Local Churches Call local churches for information

DONATIONS:

To donate water, blankets, heaters, and transportation services, contact during business hours:

- Anderson County Office of Emergency Management 903-723-7813
- Palestine Fire Department 903-729-7100
- City of Elkhart 903-764-5657
- City of Frankston 903-876-2241
- People Attempting To Help (PATH) 903-597-4044
- Palestine Senior Citizens Center/Meals on Wheels 903-729-0612

REPORTING SYSTEMS:

Emergency Rooms and EMS Providers keep records of the number of cold weather-related injuries and illnesses 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.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Go to [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) for additional information on building your emergency disaster kit and to create a plan in case a disaster or emergency arises.