

## Introduction

Extreme temperatures impact people in different ways, depending on age, underlying medical conditions and how well they are acclimatized to experienced conditions. Exposure to extreme temperatures for long periods without reprieve can make it difficult for the human body to maintain a consistent body temperature. This plan identifies the role of the City of Lethbridge, and external stakeholders during extreme temperature events.

## Extreme Temperatures

Environment and Climate Change Canada is charged with determining the need for temperature-related warnings. Forecasted daily temperatures and humidex values are compared to the following thresholds to determine if a temperature-related warning is required in Southern Alberta.

Advisory Status	Threshold
Heat Warning	Issued when 2 or more consecutive days of daytime maximum temperatures are expected to reach 32°C or warmer and nighttime minimum temperatures are expected to fall to 16°C or warmer.
Extreme Cold Warning	Issued when the temperature or wind chill is expected to reach minus 40° C for at least two hours

## Components

Public Education:

- Website and Social Media – City of Lethbridge, and Government of Alberta
- Public media messaging

Monitoring:

- Monitoring of weather forecasts
- Identify weather situations that adversely affect human health

Response:

- Implementing mechanisms for issuing warnings when a weather situation is forecasted which could adversely affect human health
- Promoting public health activities to prevent temperature-related illness and death
- Increase community outreach
- Increased surveillance
- Dissemination of educational/awareness material

- Support social service providers in collaborative donation centers for heat and extreme cold warning supplies (e.g., water bottles, warm clothing)
- Distribute bottled water to high-risk populations (heat warning)
- Support local outreach in the distribution of available warm clothing to high-risk populations (extreme cold warning)
- Identify potentially dangerous situations
- Opening cooling or heating centers when appropriate
- Provision of bus transportation for reprieve, and to cooling or heating centers

### **Objectives:**

1. Ensure the community is provided with the issued warning, and what precautions to take when temperatures reach extreme levels
2. Coordinate community response when temperatures reach extreme levels
3. Ensure the high-risk populations are cared for when temperatures reach extreme levels
4. Provide cooling or heating centers when appropriate
5. Activate the City's Municipal Emergency Management Plan when appropriate

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Emergency Management**

- Provide public education relating to hazard awareness and individual emergency preparedness
- The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) monitors weather data from Environment and Climate Change Canada, including temperature and humidex for the City of Lethbridge.
- Emergency Management receives notification from Environment and Climate change Canada when heat or extreme cold warnings will be issued based on upcoming forecasts.
- Notify the Emergency Management Agency (ELT) and Emergency Advisory Committee (Council) of a forecasted extreme temperature event
- Support public communication
- Convene stakeholder meetings as required
- The Director of Emergency Management (DEM) may elect to activate the City's Emergency Coordination Center (ECC)

### **Community Social Development (CSD)**

- Upon notification through OEM, CSD will liaise with community service providers to:
  - Ensure initial notifications and situational updates are received
  - Assist with needs assessments for additional resources or response components and communicate needs to OEM for logistical support

### Emergency Social Services (ESS)

- In the event additional facilities or supports are required, the City ESS team may be activated to provide:
  - Emergency shelters and included elements (i.e., emergency food, clothing, shelter, family reunification)
  - Activation and coordination of disaster service providers (i.e., Canadian Red Cross & the Salvation Army)
  - Operational oversight for emergent challenges through the ECC
- Note: If activating an emergency shelter, the City must notify Alberta Health Services (AHS) to confirm activation and compliance with Public Health standards

### Emergency Shelters and Community Organizations

- Share information on prevention of temperature-related illness to clients
- Inform staff and volunteers regarding summer and winter operating plans
- Activate relevant response plans
- Collaborate with other shelters and community organizations to support vulnerable populations
- Collaborate with first responders on any necessary interventions and responses

## Procedure

### The City of Lethbridge will:

- Notify the public, community stakeholders and health care agencies through its communication network that the plan has been activated
- Open cooling or heating centers when appropriate

### Activation of the Extreme Temperature Response Plan

#### Level 1 – Extreme Temperature Warning

- Emergency Management will notify all community partners through communication networks
- City of Lethbridge Corporate Communications will issue a news release including the following information:
  - Extreme heat, or extreme cold warning issued
  - Criteria upon the warning is based
  - General information on extreme temperature-related health effects
  - Recommended protective measures for public
  - Recommended preventative measures for the public, where applicable
  - Means by which to obtain additional information

- Emphasis on the need for individuals to check on friends, family, and neighbors who may be vulnerable to the heat, and may require assistance in implementing recommended protective actions
- Establish cooling or heating centers as appropriate (full list of facilities in Appendix A)
- Collaborate with community partners to determine additional supports required, and for information sharing

### **Level 2 – Extended Extreme Temperature Warning**

- All actions in level 1 continue
- News release regarding the extended heat warning released by Corporate Communications
- Meeting of all City stakeholders to occur to discuss implementation of any or all of the following additional actions:
  - Distribution of required resources, such as bottled-water, food or clothing to vulnerable populations in conjunction with community partners (i.e., Salvation Army)
  - Requesting local utilities halt all service cancellations until after the extreme temperature event has passed
  - Opening of additional cooling or heating centers (full list of facilities in Appendix A)
  - Activation of City ESS, and emergency shelters
- Increase public outreach using additional resources such as
  - Police
  - Utilities Staff

### **Deactivation**

Responses undertaken by the City should only be deactivated on a day in which Environment and Climate Change Canada's 2-day forecast (i.e. today and tomorrow) does not exceed the thresholds of temperature or humidex forecasts resulting in an extreme-temperature warning.

When notified by Environment and Climate Change Canada that the extreme temperature warning has ended, the City of Lethbridge will issue an updated news release, to include:

- Announcement of the end of the extreme temperature warning
- Specify criteria upon which the deactivation is based
- Specify the need for continued awareness against temperature-related health effects with vulnerable populations as there can be a lag period between exposure to extreme temperatures and ill health effects
- Provide directions on where the public can obtain additional information
- Announce the closure of cooling or heating centers

## Appendix A: Emergency Facilities

### Heating and Cooling Center Locations:

#### City of Lethbridge-Operated Facilities

- Lethbridge Transit Park N' Ride
- City Transit Busses
- Lethbridge Public Library: Main and Crossing Branch
- Helen Schuler Nature Center

#### Community-based Facilities (Publicly available contacts)

- Streets Alive
  - Warehouse (donations): 403-635-9362
- Interfaith Food Bank: 403-320-8022
- Lethbridge Food Bank: 403-320-1879

### Reception Center Venues – Redacted – See ESS Plan