

Saskatoon's Heat Response

Summer 2019



***A Community Plan to help Individuals and Families
Experiencing Homelessness during Extreme Hot Temperatures***

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*Saskatoon’s Heat Response is managed by
Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) in
conjunction with the Cold Weather Strategy.*



Background

Due to the extreme heatwaves experienced in Saskatoon during the summer of 2018, community partners of the Cold Weather Strategy convened to implement a City-wide Heat Response. The Heat Response exists to ensure designated cooling spaces are in place for Saskatoon's homeless population, greatly reducing their risk of heat exposure-related illnesses during the summer months.

This strategy is designed to work with existing services to ensure situational awareness and promote coordinated effort so everyone has access to cooling areas during Saskatoon's extreme hot temperatures from May 1st to September 1st.

Principles

While individual service providers make their own policies, they also collectively agreed to be flexible with their policies during extreme weather to ensure people are safe.

This strategy is guided by the following principles:

- Individual dignity must be respected even in emergency situations: each person should have access to water and the option to escape extreme hot temperatures in the summer;
- Everyone is allowed access to designated cooling places (such as shelter lobbies), including intoxicated persons or those previously placed on a “**do not admit**” list from shelters; and
- Cool, indoor spaces should be available as needed 24 hours a day.

Hot Weather Alert

A **Hot Weather Alert Level 1 (Heat Warning)** will be distributed by email from SHIP when the temperature reaches 30°C or greater. Community partners will be encouraged to put a special focus on water bottle distribution and access to “cooling locations.”

A **Hot Weather Alert Level 2** will be distributed through **notifynow** by The Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) when the temperature reaches 32°C or greater (criteria in Appendix B). If criteria are reached for a level 2 warning, focus will be on water bottle distribution and priority will be made to help vulnerable individuals access an indoor cooling location if needed.

Transportation options listed in Appendix D.

A **Hot Weather Alert Level 3A** will be distributed through **notifynow** by The Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) when the temperature reaches 32°C with an overnight of no less than 16°C or a humidex of 38°C (criteria in Appendix B). If criteria is reached for a level 3 warning focus will be on water bottle distribution and access to emergency shelter beds will be provided, including those on a “do not admit” list.

An **Air Quality Alert Level 3B** will be distributed through **notifynow** by Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) when the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) reaches level 7 or higher (criteria in Appendix B). This will be determined by an air quality statement issued by Environment Canada. If

criteria are reached for a **level 3B** warning, access to emergency shelter beds will be provided, including those on a “do not admit” list.

A **Level 4 Alert** will be distributed through **notifynow** by Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) when both Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) reaches level 7 & combined temperature reaches criteria set out for a **Level 3A Alert**. (32°C with an overnight of no less than 16°C or a humidex of 38°C) In addition to water-bottle distribution, and shelter bed access, including those on a “do not admit” list, strategy partners, especially shelter staff, will liaison with the Saskatchewan Health Authority as clients need.

The purpose of the Hot Weather Alert is to provide all participants with a Continuity of Operations Plan within the existing Strategy. This plan provides the structure needed for multiple organizations to coordinate their response to unusual circumstances that would reduce the capacity, or effectiveness, of one or more organizations in the provision of designated cooling spaces during heatwaves in the summer months.

Note: When a Hot Weather Alert Level 2 - 4 is issued, it remains active until there is a notification email/text that it has ended.

When a **Hot Weather Alert** is in place, any front-line service provider who comes into contact with a homeless person will be encouraged to take the extra step of ensuring that person has access to an indoor location for cooling down purposes.

A Step-by-Step outline of the Hot Weather Alert process can be found in Appendix A

Target Groups

A screening mechanism is currently in place to ensure that people are directed to the appropriate services. Strategies for helping some of the most vulnerable target populations are outlined in **Appendix C – List of Target Groups**.

Transportation

Homeless individuals and families who need heat response services may be too far away to walk so free transportation is necessary. **(A list of transportation providers is in Appendix D)**

Cool-Down Locations

Homeless individuals and families can cool-down at various locations listed in **Appendix E**.

Bottled Water Distribution

As part of the Heat Response, bottled water will be distributed to community partners between May 1st and September 1st to ensure vulnerable individuals stay hydrated. The stockpiled water will be stored at **(yet to be confirmed)**

Communication

Pocket cards produced by Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership with information about free services available in Saskatoon will continue to be provided. It is important that individuals and families experiencing homelessness are informed of the options available. A communications strategy will be developed to increase awareness of the issue and the response. Posters listing “Cool Down” locations will also be distributed by SHIP

Strategy Evaluation and Feedback

Starting in 2019, the Heat Response Committee will meet twice annually, in April and October. Heat Response Committee meeting will be held in conjunction with the Cold Weather Strategy Committee meeting unless requested otherwise. The Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) will convene the meetings to review the implementation of the strategy and whether it has met the needs of Saskatoon’s homeless population.

Members of the Heat Response Committee

- City of Saskatoon – Emergency Measures Organization (EMO)
- City of Saskatoon - Recreation and Community Development Division
- Community Support Officers (CSO)
- CUMFI
- EGADZ
- Ministry of Social Services
- The Salvation Army
- Saskatoon Crisis Intervention Service
- Saskatoon Health Authority – Brief Detox, Street Outreach Team
- Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership
- Saskatoon Indian Métis Friendship Centre
- Saskatoon Police Service
- Saskatoon Public Libraries
- SWITCH
- The Bridge on 20th Street
- The Lighthouse Supported Living
- United Way of Saskatoon and Area
- Westside Community Clinic
- YWCA

Become a Member of the Heat Response Advisory Team

The EMO provides members of the Heat Response Team with information regarding alerts and status updates. This list is confirmed and/or updated at each team meeting. If your group wants to be added to the alert system, please email Shaun Dyck at sdyck@shipweb.ca with updated contact information and preferred method of contact (alerts are typically sent out via text and email).

Appendix A – Hot Weather Alert – Step by Step

Monday to Friday	<i>The Saskatoon Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) will automatically trigger a <u>Hot Weather Alert Level 2-4</u> to the CWA Team using the criteria listed in Appendix B.</i>
Weekends & Holidays	<i>The Community Support Officers (CSO) will trigger a Hot Weather Alert (through Fire Dispatch) to the CWA Team using the criteria listed in Appendix B.</i>
<i>Note: Any member of the CWA team can request and alert. Once a Hot Weather Alert Level 2 -4 is issued, it remains active until there is a notification email/text that it has ended.</i>	

When triggered, the Hot Weather Alert process will occur as follows:

- **A Hot Weather Alert Message will be sent:**
 - **TEXT/EMAIL TITLE:** Hot Weather Alert (Level #)
 - **TEXT SUBJECT:** Hot weather conditions. Follow instructions in the 2019 Heat Response. Check Email instructions
 - **EMAIL SUBJECT:** Hot weather conditions exist. **Follow instructions in the 2019 Heat Response.** If needed, check email for attachments. *(The email will include the Assessment Form and the 2019 Heat Response with instructions on dialing into the coordination call.)*
- **When you receive a Hot weather alert, submit the attached assessment form to:**
EMO.EOC@saskatoon.ca , ONLY IF YOUR AGENCY IS HAVING AN ISSUE OR IS REQUESTING A CONFERENCE CALL. Fill out 401 or respond by email that your response is in place.
- **Note: The following conference call procedure is only applicable during weekdays**
 - If there are no issues or requests for a call, a conference call **will NOT** take place;
 - Any agency can request EMO to initiate a conference call. If a call is required, agencies will be notified of a 4pm (1600h) conference call;
 - EMO will facilitate the conference call. Agencies will be asked to share any relevant information.
 - Each partner agency should have an assigned person to participate in conference calls and all partner agencies need to be represented on the conference call.

For any other circumstances that require an alert (i.e. closure due to power outage, flood, etc.), contact the Saskatoon Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) 306-975-3030. Contact SHIP as manager of the Heat Response. (crandall@shipweb.ca & sdyck@shipweb.ca) The agency initiating the alert will chair the call. Other emergency services will be included as necessary.

Appendix B – Hot Weather Alert Triggers

The Saskatoon Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) or the Community Support Officers (CSO) will trigger a Hot Weather Alert to the CWA Team using any of the following criteria:

Trigger Type	Threshold Criteria	Alert Responsibility
Level 1 Daytime Temperatures	When the air temperature is expected to reach 30°C according to the Environment Canada Website Hourly Forecast Page https://weather.gc.ca/forecast/hourly/sk-40_metric_e.html	SHIP Email
Level 2 Daytime Temperatures	When the air temperature is expected to reach 32°C according to the Environment Canada Website Hourly Forecast Page https://weather.gc.ca/forecast/hourly/sk-40_metric_e.html	EMO through notifynow
Level 3A Extreme Hot Temperatures within a 24-hour Period	When the air temperature is expected to reach 32°C with an overnight of 16°C or a humidex of 38°C	EMO through notifynow
Level 3B Air Quality Statement from Environment Canada	When the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) reaches level 7 or higher. This will be determined by an air quality statement issued by Environment Canada (https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/air-quality-health-index/understanding-messages.html)	EMO through notifynow
Level 4 Extreme Hot Temperatures combined with AQHI Statement	When the air temperature is expected to reach 32°C with an overnight of 16°C or a humidex of 38°C and when the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) reaches level 7 or higher.	EMO through notifynow

For any other circumstances that require an alert and are not listed in the table above, any Heat Response Advisory Team agency can contact Fire Dispatch directly at (306) 975-3030 to request a Hot Weather Alert be issued.

The City of Saskatoon Emergency Measures Organization provides a standardized and repeatable process through which all responding organizations, both inside and outside the City of Saskatoon, can quickly and effectively exchange information, accurately determine the top priorities, and plan an efficient, coordinated response. In the event of an extreme heat event in Saskatoon the EMO could activate the City of Saskatoon Emergency Measures Plan on a broader scale to ensure the safety and well-being of all citizens. Members of the Heat Response Committee could be involved in a larger-scale coordinated response.

Appendix C – List of Target Groups

In general, if individuals or families need assistance, contact:

Monday – Friday (8:00am – 5:00pm)	After MSS business hours, weekends & holidays
Ministry of Social Services (MSS) (306) 933-5960	The Salvation Army (306) 244-6280

The following screening mechanism is currently in place:

<p>SCREEN FOR BRIEF DETOX</p> <p><i>Client presentation....</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Agreeing to service ➤ Intoxicated ➤ Coherent ➤ Able to communicate ➤ Able to ambulate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Can transport themselves unassisted ➤ History of seizures or history of medical risk 	<p>SCREEN FOR LIGHTHOUSE</p> <p><i>Client presentation....</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Agreeing to service ➤ Intoxicated ➤ Coherent ➤ Able to Communicate ➤ Ambulatory – not confined to bed or wheelchair
<p>SCREEN FOR EMS (CALL 9-1-1)</p> <p><i>Client presentation....</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ABCD’s (Airway, Breathing, Circulation, Deadly Bleed) ➤ Unconscious/unresponsive ➤ Significant trauma or illness ➤ Semi-conscious, i.e. dazed & confused, unable to stand or complete simple tasks, lack of coherency, etc. ➤ No or labored breathing ➤ Suspected drug overdose ➤ Extreme agitation/confusion ➤ Experiencing hallucinations ➤ Experiencing seizures ➤ Vomiting or evidence of vomitus 	<p>SCREEN FOR POLICE</p> <p><i>Client presentation...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hostile ➤ Violent ➤ Requires Detainment – i.e. wanted person, court conditions, etc.

People who are on a “Do Not Admit” List from Shelters

People placed on a “Do Not Admit” list at a shelter will be allowed to enter the designated cool-down location at partnering shelters. These people will be monitored, frisked for illegal substances, etc. as required. During **Level 3 and Level 4** alerts individuals on a “do not admit” list will be provided with a shelter bed.

People who choose not to access services

An estimated 15-30 people choose to stay away from all government systems and assistance, staying outside. This group is particularly vulnerable and of concern.

This group of people are well known to each other. They self-monitor the whereabouts of other group members, alerting agencies like CUMFI or The Bridge when someone goes missing. In hot weather, some of these individuals find indoor accommodations with friends and family (both in Saskatoon and in their home communities), and some may use the shelter system. A more formal monitoring system was considered but deemed unworkable.

The Ministry of Social Services is working with The Lighthouse and The Salvation Army to identify feasible ways and support required to work with these individuals to build trust and, eventually, help them accept services. The principle behind this work is to ensure the health and safety of vulnerable individuals (stay hydrated, come in for meals, to use the washroom, and to take cool-down breaks).

Appendix D – List of Transportation Providers

Some individuals experiencing homelessness need hot weather services that may be too far away to walk, so free transportation is necessary. The following organizations should be contacted if an individual requires transportation:

**If an individual requires services above what staff at a City of Saskatoon Leisure Centre is able to provide, focus should be made to contact transportation providers listed below, liaison and referrals can be made to shelters, if needed contact SHIP for clarity.

Ministry of Social Services (MSS): (306) 933-5960

- Monday-Friday, 8:00am – 5:00pm
- After MSS business hours, weekends and holidays

Lighthouse Mobile Outreach (actively seeks people who may be at risk): (306) 653-0538

- 10:00am – 10:00pm (Midnight)

EGADZ Outreach Van: (306) 221-3719

- Monday – Friday 9:30am – 1:00am
- Saturday 5:00pm – 1:00am
- Sunday 4:00pm – 12:00am (Midnight)

Saskatoon Crisis Intervention Service: (306) 933-6200

- Available 24 hours a day and can help an individual experiencing homeless access transportation, shelter, food and other needs.

Appendix E – List of Cool-Down Locations

<h1>LIST OF COOL-DOWN LOCATIONS</h1> <p>AS PART OF SASKATOON'S HEAT RESPONSE </p>	
SALVATION ARMY (FOYER) 339 Avenue C South (306) 244-6280	HOURS: EVERYDAY, 24 HOURS
THE LIGHTHOUSE 304 2 Avenue South (306) 653-0538	HOURS: EVERYDAY, 24 HOURS
SASKATOON PUBLIC LIBRARY (ALL BRANCHES) (306) 975-7558	HOURS: MON - THURS: 10:00am - 9:00pm FRI - SAT: 10:00am - 6:00pm NOTE: These hours are for Frances Morrison Central Library, Dr. Freda Ahenakew Branch, and Mayfair Branch. Hours will vary at other library locations.
SASKATOON INDIAN & MÉTIS FRIENDSHIP CENTRE 168 Wall Street (306) 244-5122	HOURS: MON-FRI: 8:30am - 9:00pm SAT: 9:00am - 4:00pm SUN: 12:00pm - 7:00pm
SASKATOON (WESTSIDE) COMMUNITY CLINIC 1528 20th Street West (306) 664-4310	AM HOURS: MON-FRI: 9:30am - 12:00pm PM HOURS: MON: 1:00pm - 4:30pm WED: 2:00pm - 4:30pm TUES-FRI: 1:00pm - 5:00pm
SWITCH CLINIC (306) 664-4310	HOURS: WED: 5:30pm - 8:00pm Closed all holidays
EGADZ (YOUTH ONLY) 485 1st Avenue North (306) 931-6644	HOURS: MON-FRI: 3:30pm - 9:00pm SAT: 1:00pm - 9:00pm
CUMFI 315 Avenue M South (306) 975-9999	HOURS: MON-FRI: 8:30am - 4:30pm
AIDS SASKATOON 1143 Avenue F North (306) 242-5005	HOURS: MON-FRI: 10:30am - 4:00pm
OUTSASKATOON 320 21st Street West (306) 665-1224	HOURS: MON-FRI: 9:00am - 5:00pm
FRIENDSHIP INN 619 20th Street West (306) 242-5122	HOURS: EVERYDAY, 8:00am - 2:00pm
ALL CITY OF SASKATOON: LEISURE CENTRES (ACCESS TO LOBBY) SPRAY PARKS & PADDLING POOLS (FREE ACCESS)	
SASKATOON'S HEAT RESPONSE IS MANAGED BY: SASKATOON HOUSING INITIATIVES PARTNERSHIP	
 SASKATOON HOUSING INITIATIVES PARTNERSHIP If you have any questions about the strategy, Please call (306) 979-6707 www.shipweb.ca	     
  	