



EXTREME COLD, SNOW, AND ICE INCIDENT PLAYBOOK

KING COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

NOVEMBER 2022

PLAYBOOK OVERVIEW

This Extreme Cold, Snow, and Ice Incident Playbook is designed to accomplish the following:

- Serve as a training aid to familiarize the reader with the roles and responsibilities of partners;
- Offer operational guidance to responsible partners and decision-makers by providing thresholds and checklists; and
- Outline the flow of information among partners.

PREPAREDNESS

During the **late spring, summer, and early fall**, and before the onset of the portion of the year when extreme cold, snow, and ice incidents are most likely to occur, King County Emergency Management will lead enterprise partners in the conduct of preparedness activities. This phase includes critical tasks and activities necessary to build and improve KCOEM and Emergency Management Program operational capabilities to protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from extreme cold, snow, and ice-related events.

	ACTIVITY	ROLE/RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETED	REQUIRED ACTION
PREPAREDNESS	Convene a pre-winter season planning session with appropriate emergency management enterprise partners and relevant partners to discuss issues and concerns for the upcoming season. Partners share anticipated actions and updates.	KCOEM – Operations DCHS, PHSKC, FMD, DLS, RASKC, Cities		
	Conduct annual review of Extreme Cold, Snow, and Ice Incident Playbook and make appropriate updates. Solicit feedback and recommendations for upcoming season from local jurisdictions.	KCOEM – Operations		
	Validate 24/7 contact information and communication resources and identify audience of 24/7 contacts.	KCOEM – PIO, KCOEM - Operations		



Review and update plans / procedures for emergency notifications, information dissemination, and Continuity of Operations (COOP) plan activation procedures.	KCOEM – Planning King County agencies, Cities		
Convene meeting to review strategies for opening warming centers.	KCOEM – Operations, DCHS, PHSKC, FMD, DLS, RASKC, Cities		
Plan and facilitate Winter Weather Seminar / winter outlook event to share situational awareness with partners.	KCOEM – all sections		
Facilitate review of and / or identification of potential severe weather shelter locations / warming centers.	ESF 6 (DCHS), FMD, DLS, KCOEM, RASKC, Cities		
Review all relevant task force documents and contact lists including: Lowland Snow and Ice Task Force Concept of Operations and contact list; Winter Weather Coordination Call agenda, participants, and contact list.	KCOEM – Operations		
Participate in annual US-2 Task Force meeting.	KCOEM – Operations		
Review / update WA Department of Transportation plans for road salt and sand and validate contact information.	KCOEM – Operations		
Conduct annual review of ESF elements of Extreme Cold, Snow, and Ice Incident Playbook	All ESFs		
Review and update plans / procedures	All ESFs		
Facilitate process to review and update the King County Winter Weather Medical Appointment Transportation Procedures and contact list each fall season.	ESF-8 (Public Health)		
Coordinate with Washington Department of Health regarding changes or updates to state guidance.	ESF-8 (Public Health)		
Review cold-, snow-, and ice-related messaging and web content.	All ESFs		
Share recommendations for public in advance of incidents	All ESFs		
Connect with NWHRN on messaging for hospitals and long-term care facilities.	ESF-8 (Public Health)		



RESPONSE OPERATIONS

TRIGGER: NWS OUTLOOK BELOW 1,000 FT ELEVATION

The National Weather Service will issue an Outlook for winter weather including extreme cold, snow, and ice that may cause significant impact **in the next 7 days** and eventually lead to the issuance of a Watch or Warning.

	ACTIVITY	ROLE/RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETED	REQUIRED ACTION
NWS OUTLOOK	Review weather briefings from National Weather Service and distribute to All-Hazards Notification List	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Brief Duty Manager on potential actions	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Contact NWS to gather more information on weather forecast trends	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Assess potential resource needs and start gathering vendor lists	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Check for snow shovel and salt/deicer in OEM storage	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Initiate a conference call with KC departments (DCHS, Public Health) and local jurisdictions to ascertain who plans to open shelters, approximate capacity, and anticipated support/resources needs	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Ask all departments and local jurisdictions opening shelters to send details and URL to KCOEM PIO to post on the Emergency News Blog	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	If requested, convene the Lowland Snow and Ice Task Force and initiate the conference call utilizing the CodeRed Emergency Alert system (any member agency of the task force can request that the KCOEM Duty Officer convene the task force).	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Contact KCRHA to determine their level of activation and current and projected activities and communicate information to cities. Share KCRHA resource and shelter information on KC Emergency News Blog, KC website, and social media as appropriate.	KCOEM Operations, KCOEM Zone Liaisons, KCOEM PIO		



Initiate a conference call to review the King County Winter Weather Medical Appointment Transportation Procedures, winter weather forecast, actions being taken by transit agencies, and availability of resources that could be used to provide individuals transportation to and from critical medical appointments	ESF-8 (Public Health)		
Consider activation of a Critical Medical Transportation Task Force and a referral system to serve patients who are unable to self-transport to critical medical appointments (see King County Winter Weather Medical Appointment Transportation Procedures)	ESF-8 (Public Health)		
Review staffing and make notifications to staff regarding possible activation	All ESFs		
Coordinate with NWHRN on impacts to healthcare facilities – including activation of DMCC as needed	ESF-8 (Public Health)		
Coordinate with HCHN regarding outreach to people living homeless	ESF-8 (Public Health)		
Activate Stage 1 Severe Weather Shelters when any one of the following criteria are met: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forecasted or actual snow accumulation of more than 1 inch.• Forecasted or actual temperatures of 25 degrees Fahrenheit or below.• Two or more days where temperatures are forecasted or reach 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below.	ESF-6 (DCHS)		
Notify direct services providers of shelter activation.	ESF-6 (DCHS)		
Conduct daily conference call with partners during activation.	ESF-6 (DCHS)		
Maintain a list of shelter resources added and/or available during severe weather.	ESF-6 (DCHS)		



TRIGGER: NWS WATCH BELOW 1,000 FT ELEVATION

The National Weather Service will issue a Watch in the **24 to 48 hour** forecast time frame when the risk of a hazardous winter weather event has increased (50 – 80% certainty that warning thresholds will be met). Watches are issued when conditions are favorable for a significant winter storm event (heavy sleet, heavy snow, ice storm, heavy snow and blowing snow or a combination of events.)

	ACTIVITY	ROLE/RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETED	REQUIRED ACTION
NWS WATCH	Convene KC internal meeting to discuss potential for further actions (OEM, PH, DCHS, DLS, RASKC, FMD).	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Survey cities on potential actions.	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Make recommendation to Leadership Team on KCOEM activation posture.	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Communicate EOC posture to PIO.	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	If requested, convene the Lowland Snow and Ice Task Force and initiate the conference call utilizing the CodeRed Emergency Alert system (any member agency of the Task Force can request that the KCOEM Duty Officer convene the Task Force).	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Schedule PIO Coordination Call (refer to SOG).	KCOEM PIO		
	Update KC Emergency News Blog.	KCOEM PIO		
	Coordinate updates to KC Website (if necessary).	KCOEM PIO		
	Coordinate social media updates (if necessary).	KCOEM PIO		
	If Critical Medical Transportation Task Force and referral system is activated, provide call operators with situational awareness via Snapshots or Situation Reports.	KCOEM Operations		
	Contact KCRHA to determine their level of activation and current and projected activities and communicate information to cities. Share	KCOEM Operations, KCOEM Zone Liaisons, KCOEM PIO		



KCRHA resource and shelter information on KC Emergency News Blog, KC website, and social media as appropriate.			
Consider activation of a Critical Medical Transportation Task Force and a referral system to serve patients who are unable to self-transport to critical medical appointments (see King County Winter Weather Medical Appointment Transportation Procedures)	KCOEM Operations - Lead, ESF-8 (Public Health)		
Coordinate supplies with OEM.	All ESFs		
Coordinate with DLS to discuss resources in place and needs in unincorporated King County.	ESF-6 (DCHS)		
Evaluate need for owned pet shelter capacity in a county owned space (e.g. RASKC) or other community space.	ESF-6 (RASKC)		
Consider activation of COOP Liaison to collect impacts to PHSKC services.	ESF-8 (Public Health)		
Coordinate with HCHN regarding outreach to people living homeless.	ESF-8 (Public Health)		
Assess potential impacts of communicable diseases circulating or outbreaks on response operations.	ESF-8 (Public Health)		
Activate Stage 2 Severe Weather Shelters when one of the criteria from 'Stage 1' and one of the following criteria is met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NWS issues a Winter Storm Watch, Advisory, or Warning. • Forecasted or actual snow accumulation of more than 3 inches. • All King County Metro Buses are on snow re-route. • 90% < utilization of shelter beds activated in Stage 1. 	ESF-6 (DCHS)		
Conduct daily conference call with partners during Activation.	ESF-6 (DCHS)		
Initiate communication with homeless services providers who may need additional support to operate their programs.	ESF-6 (DCHS)		
Arrange for daily check-in calls and provide coordination of resources for shelters and providers, including mutual aid as needed.	ESF-6 (DCHS)		
As able, make available additional financial resources to shelter and homeless service providers.	ESF-6 (DCHS)		



TRIGGER: NWS ADVISORY/WARNING BELOW 1,000 FT ELEVATION

The National Weather Service will issue an Advisory or Warning when a hazardous winter weather event is occurring, is imminent, or has a very high probability of occurrence (generally greater than 80%) and is expected to meet or exceed local Advisory or Warning criteria in the next **12 to 24 hours**.

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. Advisories are issued when snow, blowing snow, ice, sleet, or a combination of these wintry elements is expected but conditions should not be hazardous enough to meet Warning criteria.

A **Warning** is used for conditions posing a threat to life or property. Warnings are issued for a significant winter weather event including snow, ice, sleet or blowing snow or a combination of these hazards.

	ACTIVITY	ROLE/RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETED	REQUIRED ACTION
NWS ADVISORY/WARNING	Determine activation objectives.	KCOEM Duty Officer/Ops Senior Manager		
	Determine operational periods.	KCOEM Duty Officer/Ops Senior Manager		
	Prepare staffing plan for activation.	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Submit staffing plan for approval.	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Obtain mission number from WA EMD.	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Notify staff and provide staffing plan, mission number, objectives, and schedule.	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Notify KC Departments and Regional Partners regarding activation status.	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Create incident in Web EOC.	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Conduct Regional Coordination Call and brief out on KCOEM posture.	KCOEM Duty Officer		
	Monitor forecasts.	KCOEM Duty Officer		



If requested, convene the Lowland Snow and Ice Task Force and initiate the conference call utilizing the CodeRed Emergency Alert system (any member agency of the Task Force can request that the KCOEM Duty Officer convene the Task Force).	KCOEM Duty Officer		
Update KC Emergency News Blog.	KCOEM PIO		
Coordinate updates to KC Website (if necessary).	KCOEM PIO		
Coordinate social media updates (if necessary).	KCOEM PIO		
Contact KCRHA to determine their level of activation and current and projected activities and communicate information to cities. Share KCRHA resource and shelter information on KC Emergency News Blog, KC website, and social media as appropriate.	KCOEM Operations, KCOEM Zone Liaisons, KCOEM PIO		
Consider activation of a Critical Medical Transportation Task Force and a referral system to serve patients who are unable to self-transport to critical medical appointments (see King County Winter Weather Medical Appointment Transportation Procedures).	KCOEM Operations - Lead, ESF-8 (Public Health)		
If Critical Medical Transportation Task Force and referral system is activated, provide call operators with situational awareness via Snapshots or Situation Reports.	KCOEM Operations		
Determine emergency activation operational periods and establish staffing.	All ESFs		
Coordinate and disseminate extreme cold, snow, and ice-related messaging and post information to web and social media.	All ESFs		
Activate Stage 3 Severe Weather Shelters when severe weather conditions outlined in Stage 1 and 2 persist for 5 days or more.	ESF-6 (DCHS)		
Conduct daily conference call with partners during shelter activation.	ESF-6 (DCHS)		
Evaluate shelter system for strain caused by prolonged severe weather.	ESF-6 (DCHS)		
Provide funds for new shelter capacity.	ESF-6 (DCHS)		



King County
Emergency Management

	Coordinate with the Northwest Healthcare Response Network to monitor impacts to healthcare – including activation of DMCC as needed.	ESF-8 (Public Health)		
	Assess availability of and access to warming centers.	ESF-8 (Public Health)		
	Assess potential impacts of communicable diseases circulating or outbreaks on response operations.	ESF-8 (Public Health)		
	Activate owned pet shelter capacity as needed in a county-owned space (RASKC) or other community space.	RASKC + WASART		



KC EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (EOC) ACTIVATION LEVELS:

- Steady-State: Regular day-to-day KCOEM operations and monitoring by the Duty Officer.
- Enhanced: Incident or event will be monitored by Duty Officer, the Duty Manager and additional KCOEM staff (as needed). May require additional staff in the EOC or equipment and supplies from another department or jurisdiction for the incident.
- Partial: Incident or event will require staffing of the Emergency Operations Center by KCOEM staff and activating of select Emergency Support Functions. Requires additional staff in the EOC or equipment and supplies from another department or jurisdiction for the incident.
- Full: Incident or event will require KCOEM staffing the Emergency Operations Center fully and activation of many Emergency Support Functions. May require response or recovery efforts and resources.

	ACTIVITY	ROLE/RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETED	REQUIRED ACTION
EOC OPERATIONS ACTIVITIES	Send Code Red alert notifying partners that the EOC is activated.	KCOEM Duty Officer/Ops Chief		
	Send Code Red alert notifying the public of key information such as the Emergency News Blog.	KCOEM Duty Officer/Ops Chief		
	Prepare Snapshot Template.	KCOEM Duty Officer/Plans Chief		
	Contact ESFs/KC Departments daily for situational awareness (if enhanced).	KCOEM Duty Officer/Plans Chief		
	Gather situational awareness from all partners (ESFs, cities, KC Departments (if partial or full)).	KCOEM Duty Officer/Plans Chief		
	If Critical Medical Transportation Task Force and referral system is activated, provide call operators with situational awareness via Snapshots or Situation Reports.	KCOEM Duty Officer/Plans Chief		
	Update KC Emergency News Blog.	KCOEM PIO		
	Coordinate updates to KC Website (if necessary).	KCOEM PIO		
	Coordinate social media updates (if necessary).	KCOEM PIO		
	Coordinate and disseminate extreme cold, snow, and ice-related messaging and post information to web and social media.	All ESFs		



King County
Emergency Management

Coordinate with deployed liaisons.	All ESFs		
Monitor forecasts.	All ESFs		
Coordinate with the Northwest Healthcare Response Network to monitor and respond to impacts to healthcare.	ESF-8 (Public Health)		
Monitor and disseminate surveillance data related to cold-related illnesses.	ESF-8 (Public Health)		
Monitor and disseminate information on extreme cold, snow, and ice-related deaths.	ESF-8 (Public Health)		
Coordinate with ESF-6 partners on warming centers and outreach to people experiencing homelessness.	ESF-8 (Public Health)		
Produce HMAC IAP and snapshots.	ESF-8 (Public Health)		
Conduct daily conference call with partners during shelter activation.	ESF-6 (DCHS)		
Evaluate shelter system for strain caused by prolonged severe weather.	ESF-6 (DCHS)		
Provide funds for new shelter capacity.	ESF-6 (DCHS)		



ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF INFORMATION

KCOEM will ask cities and jurisdictions impacted or threatened by extreme cold, snow, and ice incidents to report on Essential Elements of Information.

KCOEM uses FEMA’s Community Lifelines to organize the collection of information and analysis processes. A lifeline enables the continuous operation of critical government and business functions and is essential to human health and safety or economic security.

Essential Elements of Information reports will enable KCOEM to track the status of each lifeline and coordinate responses to stabilize lifelines as needed.

COMMUNITY LIFELINES



Safety and Security – Law Enforcement/Security, Fire Services, Search and Rescue, Government Service, Community Safety



Food, Hydration, Shelter – Food, Hydration, Shelter, Agriculture



Health and Medical – Medical Care, Public Health, Patient Movement, Medical Supply Chain, Fatality Management



Water Systems - Potable Water Infrastructure, Wastewater Management



Energy – Power Grid, Fuel



Communications - Infrastructure, Responder Communications, Alerts Warnings and Messages, Finance, 911 and Dispatch






Transportation - Highway/Roadway/Motor Vehicle, Mass Transit, Railway, Aviation, Maritime



Hazardous Materials - Facilities, HAZMAT, Pollutants, Contaminants






KCOEM will ask cities and jurisdictions impacted or threatened by extreme cold, snow, and ice incidents to report on the following Essential Elements of Information

Community Lifelines	Essential Elements of Information
 Safety and Security	Safety hazards affecting first responder operations
	Status of government offices and schools, status of continuity of government and continuity of operations
 Food, Hydration, Shelter	Status of public and private water supply systems
	Status of supermarkets, neighborhood markets, and grocery stores
	Impacts to the food supply chain
	Requirements for shelters and warming centers
	Number and location of open shelters and warming centers, including pet shelters
	Current population in shelters and capacity of shelters
	Potential future sheltering requirements, including pet shelters
	Status of heating at shelters/repairs needed
 Health and Medical	Status of hospitals and acute medical care facilities
	Status of long-term/chronic medical care facilities
	Status of primary care and behavioral health facilities
	Status of home health agencies
	Status of pharmaceutical supply chain





King County
Emergency Management

	Status of EMS systems
	Public health advisories
 Water Systems	Status of public and private water supply systems
	Status of Wastewater systems
 Energy (Power and Fuel)	Status of electrical power generation and distribution facilities
	Number of people and locations without power
	Estimated time to restoration of power
	Number of electrically dependent persons (e.g. medical dependent) affected
	Status of critical facilities
	Availability of temporary power resources
	Status of commercial fuel stations, responder fuel availability, critical fuel facilities, fuel supply line
 Communications	Status of telecommunications, internet, and cellular service
	Status of emergency alert systems
	Options for dissemination of information to the whole community
	Status of external affairs and media communication
	Status of Emergency Operations Center(s), dispatcher and field responder communications and equipment
	Status of major roads, highways, and bridges in case of heat-related damage to roadways



King County
Emergency Management

 Transportation	Status of road and bridge maintenance and emergency repairs
	Status of public transit systems
	Status of railways and stations
	Status of airports and runways
 Hazardous Materials	N/A



King County
Emergency Management

REFERENCES

[National Weather Service Seattle/Tacoma, WA](#)

[NOAA/NWS Storm Prediction Center](#)

[King County Emergency News Blog](#)

[KC Duty Officer Weather Event SOG](#)

[KC Duty Officer Warming and Cooling Center Activation SOG](#)

DCHS Severe Weather Shelter Response Plan

King County Winter Weather Medical Appointment Transportation Procedures

Lowland Snow and Ice Task Force Concept of Operations



King County Regional Homelessness Authority extreme cold, snow, and ice activation levels and triggers

KCRHA activates their Severe Weather Response protocols based on the weather conditions listed below. KCRHA hosts subregional coordination calls for North, South, and East King County and Seattle. When protocols are activated, outreach workers and service providers may request emergency funding from KCRHA for cold weather survival supplies, and day center and shelter capacity may be expanded.

What kinds of conditions would have us activate?

CONDITION	TIER
Daily high temp predicted at 45°F or below <i>for 3 days</i>	Tier 1 Increased outreach and survival supplies
Daily high temp predicted at 40°F or below <i>for 3 days</i>	Tier 2 Opening of temporary emergency shelters
Daily low temp predicted at 35°F or below <i>for 3 days</i>	Tier 2 Opening of temporary emergency shelters
Snow or rain accumulation greater than 2 inches	Tier 2 Opening of temporary emergency shelters
Daily high temp predicted at 35°F or below <i>for 1 day</i>	Tier 3 Expanded emergency operations
Daily low temp predicted at 30°F or below <i>for 1 day</i>	Tier 3 Expanded emergency operations
Snow/rain accumulation greater than 4 inches	Tier 3 Expanded emergency operations



King County
Emergency Management

ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

COOP = Continuity of Operations Plan

DCHS = Department of Community and Human Services

DLS = Department of Local Services

DMCC = Disaster Medical Control Center

DNRP = Department of Natural Resources and Parks

EI = Essential Elements of Information

EOC = Emergency Operations Center

ESF = Emergency Support Function

FMD = Facilities and Maintenance Department

HCHN = Healthcare for the Homeless Network

HCDD = Housing Homelessness and Community Development
Division

HMAC = Health and Medical Area Command

IAP = Incident Action Plan

KCOEM = King County Office of Emergency Management

KCRHA = King County Regional Homelessness Authority

NWHRN = Northwest Healthcare Response Network

NWS = National Weather Service

PHSKC = Public Health – Seattle & King County

PIO = Public Information Officer

RASKC = Regional Animal Services of King County

WA DOH = Washington State Department of Health

WA EMD = Washington Emergency Management Division

WASART = Washington State Animal Response Team