

Table 10: Potential extreme cold preparedness and response actions, and which party or parties may be tasked with either deciding to initiate an action or implementing it on the ground. Note that municipal leaders are associated with every action, in part because this Guidebook is designed with municipal leaders as a key audience. Local capacity and needs will vary, but assigning a single person to be responsible for directing each action may help streamline the response.

Preparedness and Response Actions for Extreme Cold Thresholds	Potential Lead(s)				
	Municipal Leaders	Warming Center Operators	First Responders	Business Owners	Other CBOs
WEATHER IS COLD, BUT DOES NOT REACH NWS WARNING CRITERIA					
Apparent Temperature: 32 to 0°F - Preparedness Time Frame for Action: Long (up to 7 days)					
Identify potential warming center locations	X	X		X	X
Identify potential outdoor warming options (e.g., outdoor heaters, hot beverage distribution, etc.)	X	X		X	X
Engage key response partners (e.g., warming center location operators, emergency management/response staff, healthcare partners, etc.) for potential activation	X		X		
Assess any internal risks, e.g. to municipal staff working outdoors, municipal outdoor events, impacts to businesses and staffing, impacts to healthcare facilities, etc.	X	X	X	X	X
Apparent Temperature: 0 to -15°F - Limited Response Time Frame for Action: Long (up to 7 days)					
Consider opening/promoting formal/informal warming center locations or resource hubs	X	X		X	X
Consider opening/promoting outdoor warming options (e.g., outdoor heaters, hot beverage distribution, etc.)	X	X		X	X
Identify vulnerable groups in need of support (e.g., older adults, unhoused, those who are homebound or medically fragile) and consider outreach to partners or organizations that serve them	X		X		X
Communicate regularly with key response partners to identify areas of need and available resources	X	X	X		X
Assess any local large gatherings or events and ensure organizers have sufficient response plans, backup power, and medical support	X		X	X	
Assess any internal risks, e.g. to municipal staff working outdoors, municipal outdoor events, impacts to businesses and staffing, impacts to healthcare facilities, etc.	X	X	X	X	X
NWS COLD WEATHER ADVISORY					
Apparent Temperature: -15°F to - 25°F – Full Response Time Frame for Action: Short (usually 12-48 hours)					
Open formal warming centers and extend operations of public facilities with ample heating capabilities (i.e., town halls, schools, public libraries)	X	X		X	X
Promote informal warming locations (e.g., local businesses, movie theaters, existing shelters) and outdoor warming options (e.g., outdoor heaters, hot beverage distribution, etc.)	X	X		X	X
Consider formal and informal support networks (e.g. peer-to-peer checks) to check in on and assist at-risk or vulnerable residents	X	X	X	X	X
Communicate regularly with key response partners to identify areas of need and available resources	X	X	X		X
Consider adjusting timing/location of local outdoor events (parades, sporting events, concerts, etc.)	X			X	
Direct community members to a call 211 or a municipal information line for questions	X		X		
Direct community members to check, fuel, and safely operate generators if a snowstorm is anticipated in addition to extreme cold	X				
Consider relocating visitors, residents, occupants, and staff to warmer locations if needed	X	X		X	X

* Apparent temperature forecasts for cold can be found on any weather site or app - look for measures such as 'Feels Like' or 'Wind Chill'

** To receive notifications about NWS Advisories, Watches, and Warnings, sign up for NWS alerts at Interactive NWS (<https://inws.ncep.noaa.gov/>) or request notification from your Local Emergency Management Director, County Emergency Management Agency Director, or Maine CDC Public Health District Liaison.

Preparedness and Response Actions for Extreme Cold Thresholds

Municipal Leaders
Warming Center Operators
First Responders
Business Owners
Other CBOs

NWS EXTREME COLD WATCH

Apparent Temperature: < - 25°F to - 35°F possible – Emergency Preparedness
Time Frame for Action: Short (24-48 days)

Activate relief stations/networks (space heaters, coats, blankets, etc.) and resource hubs	X	X		X	X
Communicate with partners or organizations that serve vulnerable groups to identify needs and resources for serving their constituents	X	X			X
Organize network to perform peer-to-peer checks on at-risk or vulnerable residents where possible	X				X
Prepare and distribute public outreach materials and discuss ways to assess needs and prioritize information-sharing efforts with people at highest risk	X				
Communicate with the public to amplify key messages, communicate actions to take to stay safe, and encourage use of warming centers and other resources	X	X	X	X	X
Assess internal at-risk groups and events, such as outdoor workers, municipal activities, etc. and consider implementing mitigation options	X				
Modify/cancel outdoor activities	X			X	
Direct community members to a call 211 or a municipal information line for questions	X		X		
Direct community members to check, fuel, and safely operate generators if a snowstorm is anticipated in addition to extreme cold	X				
Consider relocating visitors, residents, occupants, and staff to warmer locations if needed	X	X		X	X
Consider increasing emergency/first responder staffing levels	X		X		

NWS EXTREME COLD WARNING

Apparent Temperature: < - 25°F to - 35°F expected – Emergency Response Time Frame for Action: Short (usually 12-48 hours)

Open formal warming centers and extend operations of public facilities with ample heating capabilities (i.e., town halls, schools, public libraries)	X	X		X	X
Promote informal warming locations (e.g., local businesses, movie theaters, existing shelters) and outdoor warming options (e.g., outdoor heaters, hot beverage distribution, etc.)	X	X		X	X
Activate relief stations/networks (space heaters, coats, blankets, etc.) and resource hubs	X	X		X	X
Communicate with partners or organizations that serve vulnerable groups to identify emergent needs from their constituents	X	X			X
Communicate with the public to amplify key messages, communicate actions to take to stay safe, and encourage use of warming centers and other resources	X	X	X	X	X
Share prepared public outreach materials through identified channels	X				
Communicate frequently with key response partners to identify areas of critical need and deploy response as needed	X		X		
Coordinate with utilities to ensure continuous service and/or to service those with greatest need	X				
Implement peer-to-peer checks on at-risk or vulnerable residents where possible	X				X
Modify/cancel outdoor activities	X			X	
Relocate residents, staff, and occupants to warmer locations if needed	X	X	X	X	
Open a county or municipal Emergency or Department Operations Center (if warranted) and assign a staff member to field questions and media inquiries (for severe events and large, complex responses)	X				
Mobilize extra emergency response and medical personnel (as needed)	X	X	X	X	X
Direct community members to a call 211 or a municipal information line for questions	X		X		