

Metro Vancouver Extreme Weather Response Criteria

Updated November 2015

The purpose of this document is to analyze and share extreme weather response criteria across the region, for consideration in review and development of EWR plans.

All 10 Metro Vancouver communities and sub-regions with extreme weather response (EWR) plans have the following phrase as the core of their extreme weather definition: **“Conditions deemed severe enough to present a substantial threat to the life and/or health of people who are homeless”**.

2015-2016 Extreme Weather Criteria and Duration: Metro Vancouver Communities

Community	Temp	Wind chill	Snow	Rain	Wind	Duration
Burnaby	0°C	0°C after WC	Accumulation	0°C/ freezing/ impossible to keep dry	Severe	Oct 15–Mar 31
Langley	-2°C	-2°C after WC	Significant	Extensive days/50mm in 24hr/ freezing	Severe wind warning; significant	Nov 1–Mar 31
Maple Ridge	-2°C	-2°C after WC	Significant	Extensive days/50mm in 24hr/ freezing	-	Nov 1–Mar 31
New West	0°C	0°C after WC	Accumulation	Heavy & near 0°C / 3+ days	Steady 70 km or 90 km gusts	Nov 1–Mar 31
North Shore	0°C	2°C before WC	Accumulation	4° with 3+ days rain/ freezing	-	Usually Oct - April
Richmond	0°C	-	Any accumulation	Near 0°C + impossible to keep dry	-	Nov 1–Mar 31
Surrey & White Rock	0°C	-	Significant	Difficult to keep dry/ freezing	Significant	Nov 1–Mar 31
Tri-Cities	0°C	0°C after WC	Significant	Heavy	Significant	fall - early spr.
Vancouver	-2°C	“Feels like” -2°C	Accumulation	Near 0°/ freezing/ 50mm in 24hr	Sustained high	Nov 1–Mar 31

Appendix: Extreme Weather Definitions 2014-2015 Plans

Burnaby

Extreme weather is defined as conditions deemed severe enough to present a substantial threat to the life or health of homeless persons such as a combination of the following weather patterns:

- Temperatures at or below 0°C temperatures are not absolute and are flexible to other weather conditions; OR
- Wind chill that reduces temperature to 0°C;
- Snow accumulation; OR
- During times of extended rainfall that make it difficult or impossible for individuals to remain dry.; OR
- Freezing rain and/or sleet; OR
- Severe wind warning

The extreme weather response is implemented:

- Between November 1 and March 31;
- Intermittently opening within the identified timeframe as required by weather conditions identified herein;
- As weather conditions require and alternate shelters within the Greater Vancouver Regional District are unable to meet the need

Langley

Extreme weather is defined as, such as:

- Temperatures at or below -2°C or feels like -2°C with wind chill; OR
- Significant snow accumulation; OR
- Extensive days of rain creating conditions where it is difficult for people to keep dry¹; OR
- 50mm of rain in a 24 hour period; OR
- Freezing rain
- Severe wind warning
- Significant windstorms that may present danger to persons living in wooded areas and/or makeshift shelters (cardboard boxes or lean-tos)

The extreme weather response is implemented:

- Between November 1 and March 31 or whenever extreme weather occurs
- Intermittently during the five-month period as weather conditions determine need

¹ These conditions would necessitate the activation of an alert for only one night. After that night, more days of rain would have to occur prior to the activation of a similar alert, and, again, this would be for only one night.

Maple Ridge

Extreme weather is defined as conditions deemed severe enough to present a substantial threat to the life or health of homeless individuals:

- Temperatures at or below -2°C or feels like -2°C with wind chill; OR
- Significant snow accumulation; OR
- Extensive days of rain creating conditions where it is difficult for people to keep dry²; OR
- 50 mm of rain in a 24 hour period; OR
- Freezing rain

The extreme weather response usually occurs:

- Between November 1 and March 31
- Intermittently during the five-month period, as weather conditions and need dictate

New Westminster

Extreme weather is defined as conditions deemed severe enough to present a substantial threat to the life and/or health of homeless persons such as a combination of the following weather patterns:

- temperatures at or below 0°C temperatures are not absolute and are flexible to other weather conditions; OR
- heavy rain in combination with low temperatures, close to 0°C; OR
- three or more days of rain creating conditions where it is difficult for people to keep dry³; OR
- snow accumulation; OR
- sustained or steady winds of 70 km/h or wind gusts up to 90km/h that present a risk to those living outdoors

The extreme weather response is implemented:

- Between November 1 and March 31
- Intermittently during the five-month period as weather conditions determine need

² These conditions would necessitate the activation of an alert for only one night. After that night, more days of rain would have to occur prior to the activation of a similar alert, and, again, this would be for only one night.

³ These conditions will necessitate the activation of an alert for only one night. After that night, three or more days of rain will have to occur prior to the activation of a similar alert, and, again, this will be for only one night.

North Shore

Extreme weather is defined as conditions deemed severe enough to present a substantial threat to the life or health of homeless persons such as:

- Temperatures at or below 0°C; OR 2°C with wind chill
- Snow accumulation; OR
- Freezing rain; OR
- Combination of low temperatures at or below 4°C with three or more consecutive days of rain

The extreme weather response is implemented:

- Usually between October to April or whenever extreme weather, as defined in the Plan, occurs
- Intermittently during this period as weather conditions determine need
- When regular local shelter beds are not available to fill the need
- Note: Outside of Nov 1 – March 31, authorization for expenses is required by permission of BC Housing (at this time)

Richmond

Extreme weather can include significant snow accumulations, severe winds or cold temperatures. For the purposes of an Extreme Weather alert in Richmond, extreme weather is defined as:

- Conditions deemed severe enough to present a substantial threat to the life or health of homeless persons; OR
- Any snow accumulation; OR
- Temperatures at or below 0°C; OR
- Temperatures near 0°C with rainfall that makes it difficult or impossible for persons who are experiencing homelessness to remain dry.

The extreme weather response usually occurs:

- Between November 1 and March 31
- Intermittently during the five-month period, as weather conditions and need dictate

Surrey / White Rock

Extreme Weather is defined as conditions deemed severe enough to present a substantial threat to the life or health of homeless people such as:

- Temperatures at or below 0°C; OR
- Significant snow accumulation or sleet/freezing rain conditions; OR
- Significant windstorms that may present danger to persons living in wooded areas and/or makeshift shelters (cardboard boxes or lean-tos); OR
- Periods of extended heavy rain creating conditions of ground saturation which make it difficult for people to keep dry.

The extreme weather response usually occurs:

- Between November 1 and March 31
- Intermittently during the five-month period, as weather conditions and need dictate

Tri-Cities

Extreme weather is defined as conditions deemed sufficiently severe to jeopardize the safety and health of persons living outdoors in the Tri-Cities:

- temperatures (day or night-time) of -2°C or below, or 0°C or below with a wind chill; OR
- heavy rain in combination with low temperatures (close to 0°C); OR
- significant snow accumulation; OR
- significant wind storms that present a risk to those living in wooded areas. The extreme weather response usually occurs:
 - Between November 1 and March 31 or whenever extreme weather occurs
 - Intermittently during the five-month period, as weather conditions and need dictate
- Anticipated weather conditions are forecast by Environment Canada for Pitt Meadows www.weatheroffice.gc.ca/city/pages/bc-35_metric_e.html

Vancouver

Extreme Weather is defined as conditions are deemed severe enough to threaten to the health and safety of homeless persons. The criteria for calling an extreme weather alert include:

- Temperatures near 0°C with rainfall that makes it difficult or impossible for homeless people to remain dry; AND/OR
- Sleet/freezing rain; AND/OR
- Snow accumulation; AND/OR
- Sustained high winds; AND/OR
- Temperatures at or below -2°C; AND/OR
- Rainfall of at least 50mm in a 24 hour period

The extreme weather response usually occurs:

- Between November 1 and March 31
- Intermittently during the five-month period, as weather conditions and need dictate