



# Saskatoon Extreme Heat and Air Quality Emergency Response Plan

An Indecent Specific Annex to the City of Saskatoon Municipal  
Emergency Plan

Saskatoon Emergency Management

2024



# Revision History

| Details       | Revised by        | Revision Number | Revision Date |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Plan creation | Laura Walter      | 001             | April 2023    |
| Plan revision | P. Goulden-McLeod | 002             | May 2023      |
| Plan revision | P. Goulden-McLeod | 003             | July 2024     |
|               |                   |                 |               |
|               |                   |                 |               |
|               |                   |                 |               |

## Extreme Heat and Air Quality Emergency Response Planning Considerations

In Saskatoon members of the Extreme Heat and Air Quality Emergency Response believe that ensuring all residents in Saskatoon have access to physical health and wellbeing supports as well as options to access cooling is the responsibility of all members. Working together we can provide a whole community approach to enhance options for those who are experiencing barriers to health and safety.

Extreme Heat and Air Quality events in Saskatoon are not a common occurrence, however, research indicates that temperatures will continue to rise. Rising temperatures compounded with urban development can pose a serious health risk to those vulnerable to extreme heat in Saskatoon. In Saskatoon member agencies work to provide options for those who are vulnerable through regular operations of outreach services, emergency shelters and access to emergency social services. There is great diversity and complexity associated with those vulnerable to heat that requires multi-sector planning with a client centered trauma informed approach. This extreme heat emergency response plan is one process in the overall community-wide coordinated, strategic and data-driven approach required to deliver services, housing, wellbeing supports, and programs.

The National Collaborating Centre for Environment Health <https://ncceh.ca/> has identified risk factors that contribute to a higher likelihood of heat related illnesses and the protective factors that can lessen impact of extreme heat.

### Risk Factors:

- Indoor temperature (heat)
- Mental illness
- Social isolation
- Substance use
- Diabetes

### Protective Factors:

- Indoor cooling
- Privilege
- Greenspace
- Social Connection

This response is intended for use during extreme heat summer weather.

These extreme heat events are most relevant for individuals living indoors with a limited capacity to cool their environments.

Factors such as

- age,
- health conditions,
- substance use,
- mental health challenges, and
- mobility limitations can combine with social isolation to increase resident's risk.

## Principles

- No one should experience heat related illness or injury status during extreme heat events.
- Individuals' dignity should be respected.
- Health and safety of residents is always a priority.
- All members of the emergency response will work collaboratively with individual organizational autonomy, to ensure that individuals and families experiencing or at-risk of suffering heat related illness or injury are aware of safe, available support options.
- All members of the emergency response will work together respectfully.

## Plan Objectives

1. Establish a process for monitoring potential extreme heat events to improve situational awareness and communication between the Saskatoon Emergency Management Organization (EMO) and Organization Members leading up to and during extreme heat events.
2. Empower individuals experiencing high internal and external temperatures, to access accurate, timely information and resources needed to keep safer during extreme weather.
3. Motivate those in supportive services and personal relationships to take guided and informed action to support those who are vulnerable to heat related illness and injury.
4. Identify potential thresholds and triggers for Saskatoon EMO and Organization members where coordination or assistance from EMO may be requested.
5. Identify and plan for response to potential secondary consequential events during an extreme heat event.
6. Identify and encourage mitigation, as well as prevention, through education and increasing awareness.
7. Create space for community empowerment through relationship building and inclusion of Indigenous perspectives.

## **Autonomy of Emergency Response Members**

Routine hot weather operations are managed by each member in accordance with their organizational policies, procedures, and practices. This emergency response plan acknowledges the autonomy of these organizations' members.

This plan recognizes autonomy of organizations along with unity in leadership and response.

### **1. Extreme Heat Event**

#### **1.1 Purpose**

##### **1.1.1 Services and Support for Impacted Residents**

The purpose of this annex to the City of Saskatoon's Municipal Emergency Plan (MEP) is to establish a coordinated approach by which the Saskatoon Emergency Management Organization (EMO) and its Organization Members will provide services and support for residents impacted by an extreme hot weather event, with an aim to reduce the incidence of extreme heat-related illness and death in Saskatoon. A secondary focus is to provide education and services to groups at increased risk for heat-related injury and illness through community empowerment and relationships.

#### **1.2 Activation Levels**

Levels for activation of the Extreme Hot Weather Emergency Response Plan will be determined and followed. The activation levels will define clear operational requirements for all members. These activations are partially based on [Environment and Climate Change Canada's Heat Warning Criteria](#).

## Extreme Heat and Air Quality Emergency Response Plan Activation Levels

|                                       | Purpose   | Activation Response   | Duration   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| <b>Watch</b>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Saskatoon EMO and members monitor emerging events improving situational awareness</li> <li>Member organizations follow normal operational procedures in ensuring individuals have information about cooling locations, water access, and emergency shelter.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Routine Staffing. Routine Operations in each member organization.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>  |
| <b>EOC Activation Levels</b>          |   |   |  |
| <b>Level I<br/>Elevated<br/>Watch</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Air temperature of +30C for 2 days according to <a href="#">ECCC</a> website hourly forecast page.</li> <li>When the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) reaches level 7 or higher for 2 days according to the <a href="#">ECCC</a></li> </ul>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level I EOC alert to all members through notifynow</li> <li>Members activate their organizations response</li> <li>401s forwarded to <a href="mailto:emo.eoc@saskatoon.ca">emo.eoc@saskatoon.ca</a> IF member organization is experiencing out of the normal operational requirements</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short (1-2 Operational Periods)</li> <li>1 or 2 days</li> </ul> |
| <b>Level II<br/>Response</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Temperature of +30C AND a minimum overnight temperature of less than +16C for 3 – 7 days</li> <li>When the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) reaches level 7 or higher for 3 - 7 days according to the <a href="#">ECCC</a></li> </ul>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level II EOC alert issued to all members through notifynow</li> <li>401s required from all member organizations within 2 hours of receiving Level II EOC alert.</li> <li>401s required for each operational period.</li> <li>501s shared with all members during</li> </ul>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More than two Operational periods (2 days)</li> </ul>           |

|                                       |   |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|
|                                       |   | each operational period  |   |
| <b>Level III<br/>Complex Response</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temperature of +30C AND a minimum overnight temperature of less than +16C for more than 7 days</li> <li>• When the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) reaches level 7 or higher for more than 7 days according to the <a href="#">ECCC</a></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full scale activation of all members</li> <li>• 401s required from all member organizations within 2 hours of receiving a Level III EOC Alert</li> <li>• 501s shared with all member organizations</li> <li>• Task force and command virtual meetings in set operational periods</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-term activation through recovery operations.</li> </ul> |

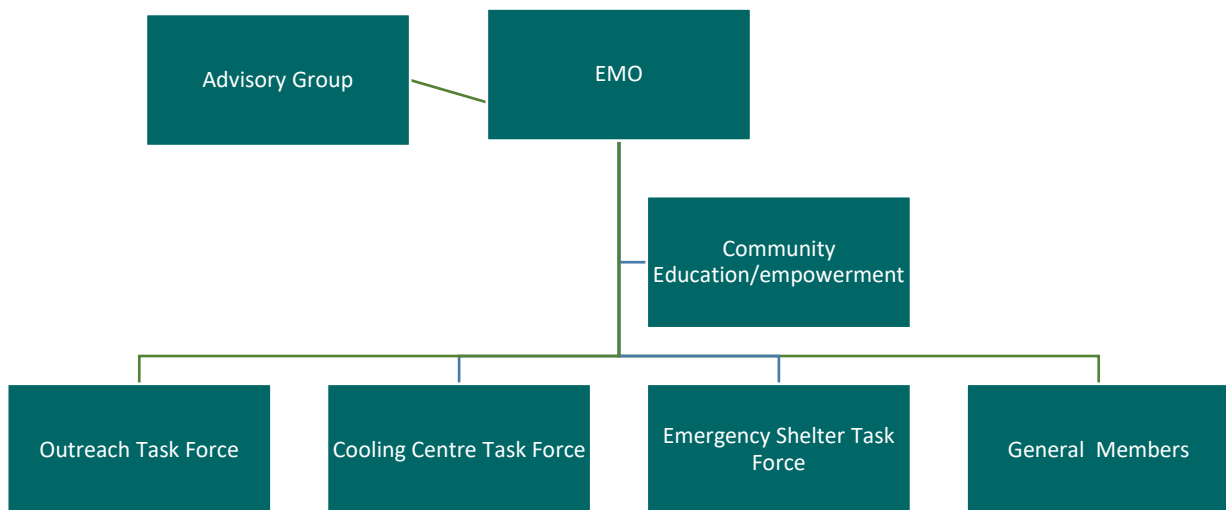
After each activation of this plan Saskatoon EMO will conduct an after-action review.  
 After action review recommendations may lead to plan updates.

## 2. Emergency Response Structure

An emergency response plan is a short-term coordination of organizations to enable multiagency collaboration to provide life-safety during extreme hot weather. The Extreme Heat Emergency Response Plan does not have the capabilities to solve systemic issues related to social isolation and social justice in Saskatoon. It is intended to ensure that during extreme heat events all residents have access to safety supports.

This structure is developed for the duration of the Extreme Heat Response activation. It is not an ongoing structure for organizational relationships.

### Extreme Heat and Air Quality Emergency Response Structure



#### Saskatoon EOC Principles:

- Unity in Leadership
- Autonomy of Command
- Facilitate Access
- Leverage Networks
- Coordinate
- Collaborate
- Communicate



## Advisory Group Members

Policy Group members provide subject matter expertise throughout the plan development and the response.

- City of Saskatoon
  - Communications and Public Engagement
  - Sustainability
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Prairie Harm Reduction
- Saskatchewan Health Authority
  - Medical Health Officer
  - Primary Health Care
- Saskatoon Emergency Management Organization (EMO)
- Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP)
- Saskatoon Public Library
- The Salvation Army

## Task Force Members

A task force is an emergency management term for “any combination of resources assembled to support a specific mission or goal. All resources within a task force have a common communication and a designated lead.”

The task force lead is the designated individual who coordinates communication and planning. This lead position is only for the duration of the activation. The lead position does not imply supervision of the other organizations or a position of authority. It is to provide enhanced coordination during the duration of the activation.

There are four task forces within this emergency response plan: Outreach, Emergency Shelters, Cooling Locations and General Supports.

The members of the task forces will work together to ensure that designated objective provides a coordinated service. These members will also support the identification of any gaps in service and provide information to be shared with other task forces.

- **Outreach Task Force**

The members of the Outreach Task Force are organizations that connect with individuals who may require emergency shelter or cooling locations. They provide initial assessment regarding individual wellness and possible resources requirements. This could occur virtually,

- **Cooling Centre Task Force**

Members of the Cooling Centre Task force are organizations that provide locations where individuals can spend time indoors to cool down from the extreme hot weather. Some locations offer water, reusable bottles, and snacks.

- **Emergency Shelter Task Force**

Members of the Emergency Shelter Task Force are organizations that provide emergency overnight shelter for individuals.

- **General Support Task Force**

Members of the General Support Task Force are organizations that can provide information about cooling centres, emergency shelters, and outreach services. They may also provide relevant information to individuals whose unique conditions may increase their risk for heat related illness.

**NOTE:**

Research has shown that many demographics of people can be affected by extreme heat. The initial clarifying factor is if a person has air conditioning in their home. People without the ability to cool their dwelling environment are at the greatest risk of heat related illness or injury during the evening.

Those members of the community who are experiencing homelessness are most vulnerable during the high heat of the day.

The Ministry of Social Services works with community partners across the province to ensure everyone has access to safe shelter and supports throughout the year. Extreme heat strategies are community-driven responses where our partners take the lead in their local communities during the summer months. This work between community and government partners will continue to develop over the coming weeks.

Those seeking emergency shelter in Saskatoon can contact the regional Income Assistance Office Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at 306-933-5960, or attend the office at 160 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave South, Saskatoon, to discuss emergency shelter options. The Salvation Army provides Emergency After Hours Support when the Ministry is closed. Anyone can call the Salvation Army at 306-244-6280 between the hours of 5pm and 8am and weekends and holidays for service.

## **Appendix A: Outreach Task Force Members**

- FASD Network of SK
- Saskatoon Tribal Council – Saweyihtotan Program
- Saskatoon Fire Department – Community Support
- Saskatoon SAGE Clan
- STR8 UP
- Meadavie Health Services West
- Saskatoon Indian and Metis Friendship Center
- Saskatoon Public Libraries

## **Appendix B: Cooling Centre Task Force Members**

- FASD Network of SK
- Saskatoon Indian and Metis Friendship Centre
- Saskatoon Public Library
- Saskatoon Friendship Inn

## **Appendix C: Emergency Shelter Task Force Members**

- YWCA Saskatoon

## **Appendix D: General Support Task Force Members**

- City of Saskatoon
  - Communication and Public Engagement
  - Community Development
  - Facilities Management
  - Saskatoon Fire Department
    - Emergency Management Organization (EMO)
  - Saskatoon Transit
- John Howard Society
- Quint Development
- Saskatchewan Health Authority
  - Health Emergency Management
  - Primary Health Care
- Saskatoon Food Bank and Learning Centre
- Saskatoon Search and Rescue
- Social Services Income Assistance Division
- St. Paul's Hospital
- The Bridge on 20<sup>th</sup> Street
- Westside Community Clinic

## Appendix E: All Members of the Extreme Heat Emergency Response Plan:

- City of Saskatoon
  - Communication and Public Engagement
  - Community Development
  - Facilities Management
  - Saskatoon Fire Department
    - Community Risk Reduction
      - Community Support
    - Emergency Management Organization (EMO)
    - Operations
  - Saskatoon Transit
- FASD Network of Saskatchewan
- Medavie Health Services West
- John Howard Society
- Ministry of Social Services
  - Income Assistance
- Quint Development
- Saskatchewan Health Authority
  - Health Emergency Management
  - Primary Health Care
- Saskatoon Food Bank and Learning Centre
- Saskatoon Indian Metis Friendship Centre
- Saskatoon Public Library
- Saskatoon SAGE Clan
- Saskatoon Search and Rescue
- Saskatoon Transit
- Saskatoon Tribal Council
- Station 20 West
- STR8 UP
- Social Services Income Assistance Division
- St. Paul's Hospital
- The Bridge on 20<sup>th</sup> Street
- Westside Community Clinic
- YWCA Saskatoon

## **Appendix F: City of Saskatoon Communications and Public Engagement (CPE): Communication Plan for Extreme Heat Emergency Response**

### **City Council Reports**

Each spring, Saskatoon EMO will provide a report to Saskatoon City Council to provide an update on the planning for the extreme heat summer season. Each fall, EMO will provide City Council with a report that summarizes the activations that occurred for the past summer.

### **Resource Poster – Cooling locations and publicly available water locations**

CPE will liaison with EMO, other members of the Extreme Heat Weather Emergency Response Plan and City of Saskatoon Visual Communications Coordinators to create a Cooling Locations poster. The poster will be updated and distributed electronically to members as the strategy evolves and locations are added/revised. Members will be responsible for printing their own paper copies. A time stamp will be included on the poster to ensure members are working with the latest version.

### **Website**

CPE will keep information about Extreme Heat Emergency Response Plan accurate and up to date on the City of Saskatoon website, including a link to the latest Cooling Locations poster. A quick link to the webpage will be created for easy reference:

[saskatoon.ca/heat](http://saskatoon.ca/heat)

### **Social Media**

The social media plan for sharing the Cooling Locations poster is as follows:

Poster is published to:

- Twitter (EMO) - [@SaskatoonEMO](https://twitter.com/SaskatoonEMO)
- Facebook (SFD) - [@saskatoonfire](https://www.facebook.com/saskatoonfire)
- Instagram (SFD) - [@saskatoonfiredepartment](https://www.instagram.com/saskatoonfiredepartment)

And retweeted/shared:

- Twitter (SFD) - [@saskatoonfire](https://twitter.com/saskatoonfire) shares from EMO Twitter
- Twitter (COS) - [@cityofsaskatoon](https://twitter.com/cityofsaskatoon) shares from EMO Twitter
- Facebook (COS) - [@cityofsaskatoon](https://www.facebook.com/cityofsaskatoon) shares from SFD Facebook

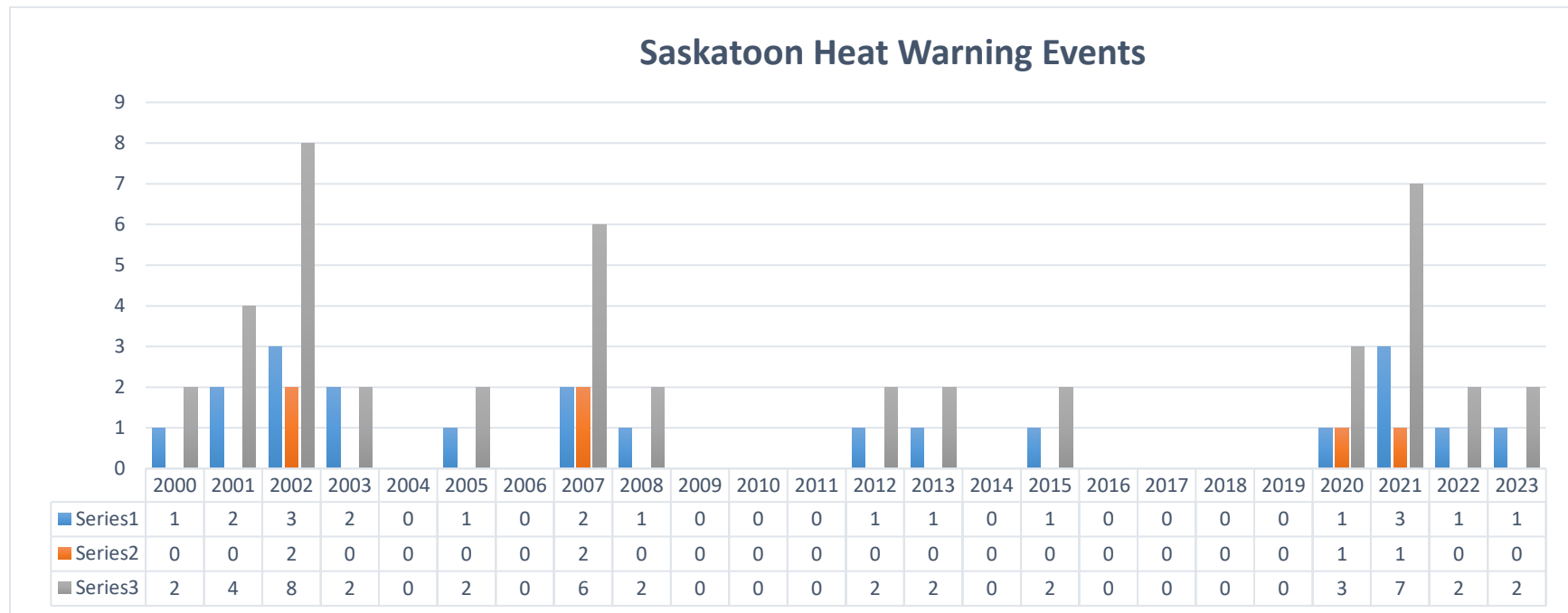
Members of the Extreme Heat Emergency Response Plan are encourage to re-share this information on their social media accounts

## Appendix G: Historical Weather Information

Historical weather information provides the members of this response with background information to help determine the number and length of possible activations of this plan.

This information has been provided by Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Saskatoon Heat Warning Events:



Series 1 – ECCC Heat Warning Events (2+ days)

Series 2 – Extended Heat Warning Events (3+Days)

Series 3 – Total Days Under Heat Warning

## **Appendix H: Information Resources**

Environment and Climate Change Canada Hourly Local Forecast:

- [https://weather.gc.ca/forecast/hourly/sk-40\\_metric\\_e.html](https://weather.gc.ca/forecast/hourly/sk-40_metric_e.html)

## **Appendix I: After Action Review**

Immediately after each activation of this plan an after-action review process will occur.

Saskatoon EMO will request all members respond to the following questions:

1. Name of organization and member completing the after-action review.
2. What worked well this activation?
3. Were there any gaps or issues with this activation?
4. Any suggestions for the next activation?

Saskatoon EMO will share the responses with all members. If a plan update is required based on this review the updated plan will be shared with all members.

In September of each year an over-all after-action review will occur. This will provide information for updating the plan for the following year.