



Creston Extreme Weather Response Plan 2026

Emergency Management Creston

CONTENTS

1.1	Town of Creston Contact Information.....	3
1.2	Introduction	3
1.3	Objective.....	3
1.4	Background.....	4
1.5	Hazard Identified: Extreme Weather	4
1.6	Health Implications	4
1.6.1	Extreme Cold.....	4
1.6.2	Extreme Heat.....	5
1.6.3	Health Impacts of Poor Air	5
1.6.4	Health Impacts of Humidity	5
1.7	Authorities & Legislation	6
1.7.1	Emergency & Disaster Management Act (EDMA)	6
1.7.2	Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)	6
1.7.3	BC Provincial Heat Alert and Response System (BC HARS): 2026	6
	Assumptions.....	7
1.8		7
1.9	Roles and Responsibilities	7
1.9.1	RCMP.....	7
1.9.2	Town of Creston	7
	Staff Qualifications Cooling and Warming Centre Operations	8
1.9.3		8
1.10	Location.....	8
1.10.1	Warming Centre.....	8
1.10.2	Cooling Centre	8
1.11	Activation Criteria.....	9
1.11.1	Table 1. Activation Criteria Extreme Cold	9
1.11.2	Table 1. Activation Criteria Extreme Heat	10
1.12	References.....	11

1.13	Appendix A. Warming Centre Criteria in the event an Extreme Weather Shelter is unavailable	12
------	--	----

1.1 TOWN OF CRESTON CONTACT INFORMATION

Main Contact:

Asha DeLisle
Emergency Management & Climate Readiness Coordinator
asha.delisle@creston.ca

Plan Activation Contact:

Cheryl Mickelson
Administrative Assistant
Cheryl.Mickelson@creston.ca
250 428 2214 ext 510

RCMP contact: (250) 428-9313

1.2 INTRODUCTION

B.C.'s climate is changing. Summers are longer and hotter, and heat waves are more intense and frequent. The changing climate also means more unpredictable weather events year-round. Winter storms and extreme cold temperatures are harder to predict and can be more dangerous.

Preparing for extreme weather is an essential step in building resilient communities. This plan is intended to provide guidelines for responding to extreme weather events, as defined in this plan, that occur within the Town of Creston.

1.3 OBJECTIVE

To provide resources or temporary refuge for residents of Creston during periods of extreme weather that threaten health and safety, including the provision of cooling and warming spaces to accommodate people of all ages and backgrounds under defined extreme weather circumstances.

Projected Outcomes

1. Reduction in health and safety risks for at-risk individuals in Creston during extreme weather events.
2. Increased public awareness and knowledge of extreme weather risks and preparedness measures.

1.4 BACKGROUND

Creston, BC is a small town located on the unceded traditional territory of the yaqan nu?kiy within the k'tunaxa Nations. It is the largest community in the Creston Valley, with a population of approximately 5,500. It serves as the economic hub to Erickson, Lister, Canyon, Wynndel, and other surrounding communities.

Creston has an aging population with the average age being 51.7, and 39% of the population is over 65.

57% of homes in Creston were built before 1980, which has the potential for increased energy costs or fewer amenities to protect from extreme weather events. There is also a small, unhoused population.

WEATHER

Creston is situated in the southeastern area of British Columbia and experiences four distinct seasons.

From 1993-2025 the highest temperature recorded at the Creston Campbell Scientific weather station was 38.8°C and the lowest was -27.2°C. The average snow cover on the ground in January from 2000-2024 was 15cm.

1.5 HAZARD IDENTIFIED: EXTREME WEATHER

The hazard being addressed in this document is extreme weather. Extreme weather can negatively impact health, or further, lead to death for at-risk individuals.

1.6 HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

1.6.1 Extreme Cold

When the temperature falls below 10°C and a person is unable to be sufficiently protected from exposure to the cold air for prolonged periods, an individual's body temperature can drop and cause hypothermia. In some instances, hypothermia can even occur at temperatures warmer than 10°C when combined with prolonged exposure to wet and windy weather (British Columbia Centre for Disease Control, 2023).

Anyone can experience cold-related injuries, but the risk is higher for certain people, including:

- People experiencing homelessness (unsheltered, unhoused, or living in places not meant for permanent habitation)
- People who use substances, including alcohol, which can impair their ability to sense or respond to cold
- Individuals who spend extended periods outdoors for work or recreation
- People living in housing without adequate insulation or without the ability to generate enough heat
- Individuals with disabilities, limited mobility, or medical conditions such as:
 - Diabetes
 - Peripheral neuropathy (muscle weakness, tingling, numbness)
 - Diseases affecting blood vessels
- People taking certain medications, such as beta-blockers
- Older adults (60+), infants, and young children

1.6.2 Extreme Heat

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) defines a heat wave as “a period where local excess heat accumulates over a sequence of unusually hot days and nights.” Extreme heat is the leading cause of illness and death from weather-related hazards in Canada. Prolonged exposure to indoor temperatures over 31° C (87.8° F) can create stress on the body that can be deadly for susceptible individuals.

Susceptibility to heat-increased-risk-of-injury is influenced by both physiological factors, such as age and health status, and exposure factors such as occupation and socio-economic conditions. Heat waves are associated with increases in mortality, particularly among older adults, those with chronic illnesses, those with specific mental illness, and disproportionately impacts those who are materially and socially disadvantaged (British Columbia Centre for Disease Control, 2025).

1.6.3 Health Impacts of Poor Air

Air pollution increases the risk of mortality, even at low ambient concentrations.

- Health Canada estimates that 17,400 deaths can be attributed to ambient air pollution in Canada in 2018.
- Individuals impacted the most by air pollution are people aged 65 and older (Health Canada, 2018)

1.6.4 Health Impacts of Humidity

The body attempts to maintain a constant internal temperature of 37°C at all times. In hot weather, the body produces sweat, which cools the body as it evaporates. As the humidity or moisture content in the air increases, sweat does not evaporate as readily. Sweat evaporation stops entirely when the relative humidity reaches about 90 percent. Under these circumstances, the body

temperature rises and may cause illness (Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, 2024).

1.7 AUTHORITIES & LEGISLATION

1.7.1 Emergency & Disaster Management Act (EDMA)

The *EDMA*, Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation, designates that a local authority (i.e., Town of Creston) is responsible for establishing and maintaining an emergency management program. This includes the responsibility of:

- Identifying hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities within their jurisdictional area and,
- Creating plans for these hazards.
- Notifying the public of impending hazards,
- Identifying the procedures by which emergency resources, including, with limitation, personnel, equipment, facilities, and financial resources, may be obtained from sources within or outside of the jurisdictional area for which the local authority has responsibility.

1.7.2 Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)

The Department informs Canadians about protecting and conserving natural heritage, predicting weather and environmental conditions, preventing and managing pollution, promoting clean growth and a sustainable environment for present and future generations.

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) issues weather alerts and warnings that inform Creston's activation of response efforts for extreme heat and cold events.

1.7.3 BC Provincial Heat Alert and Response System (BC HARS): 2026

In 2022, the BC Health Effects of Anomalous Temperatures Coordinating Committee (BC HEAT) was established to support planning and response efforts related to the public health impacts of significant heat events in BC. The BC HEAT Committee is led by the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) and the BC Ministry of Health (HLTH). The BC HEAT Committee is responsible for guiding the development of the BC Provincial Heat Alert and Response System (BC HARS), which is intended to be used as a tool to support comprehensive heat response planning.

The BC HARS 2026 activation guidelines are aligned with ECCC's new colour-coded weather alerts. This new approach is based on both an assessment of the potential impact of the weather event and forecast confidence. The higher the potential impact and the higher the confidence in the forecast, the higher the alert level. The health risk increases from Yellow to Red. A Yellow Warning is the most common, an Orange Warning is uncommon, and a Red Warning is rare.

For Creston and surrounding areas:

- Yellow Warning for Heat: Issued when forecasted daytime high temperatures (Tmax) are greater than 33-35°C and overnight low temperatures (Tmin) are greater than 15-16°C for 2+ days.
- Orange Warning for Heat: Issued at higher temperatures lasting for 3+ days.
- Red Warning for Heat: Issued at higher temperatures that are expected to increase day-over-day for 3+ days.

ASSUMPTIONS

1. Emergency response is a dynamic process that requires room for flexibility, improvisation, and collaboration. The nature of emergencies is such that not all aspects can be planned for. The structures and systems described in the plan should be viewed as guidelines that can be adjusted and adapted by those responsible for enacting the plan.
2. Table 1 in this document outlines activation criteria based on the assumption that an Extreme Weather Shelter, temporary shelter, or other overnight shelter will be active in Creston. If no overnight shelter option is available, refer to Appendix A for activation criteria.

1.8 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.8.1 RCMP

The RCMP will be notified if the Town responds to an extreme weather event by opening a cooling or warming centre.

1.8.2 Town of Creston

The Town of Creston has created this plan under Creston's Emergency Management Program and will issue or cancel extreme weather alerts as prescribed in this document, followed by the activation of an extreme warming or cooling centre.

1.8.3 Staff Qualifications Cooling and Warming Centre Operations

The following staffing requirements are recommended for daytime and overnight cooling and warming centre operations, where staffing is required.

Daytime staff requirements

- At least one person certified in Standard First Aid and CPR on duty at all times.
- Satisfactory Criminal Record Check including a vulnerable sector check
- WHMIS certificate

Overnight staff requirements:

- At least one person certified in Standard First Aid and CPR on duty
- At least one person Food Safe certified on duty
- Satisfactory Criminal Record Check including a vulnerable sector check
- At least one person with a de-escalation training on duty OR a trained security guard available on site
- WHMIS certificate
- Naloxone training

1.9 LOCATION

1.9.1 Warming Centre

The Town of Creston's primary warming centre will be located at:

1. 138 10th Ave N, Creston BC, V0B 1G0

The following locations will be considered as alternate options should the primary option be unavailable:

- Armitage Centre foyer, 121 NW Blvd, Creston BC, V0B 1G4
- Council Chambers at Town Hall, 138 10th Ave N, Creston BC, V0B 1G0

1.9.2 Cooling Centre

The Town of Creston cooling centre will be located at the Creston Emergency Services Building at 1505 Cook Street, Creston BC, V0B 1G4.

ACTIVATION CRITERIA

1.9.3 Table 1. Activation Criteria Extreme Cold

	Criteria	Town Actions
Pre-season	N/A	- Staff participate in exercises and forums to discuss/improve collective response to extreme cold - Educational materials such as cold health information are shared
Extreme Cold Activation	- Environment Canada issues a Yellow, Orange, or Red Extreme Cold Warning OR - A hazard, such as a widespread power outage, highway closure, or other event, creates the need for a warming centre, as determined by the Emergency Management & Climate Readiness Coordinator.	- Task # requested from EMCR - Expenditure Authorization Forms (EAF) submitted to PREOC - Town staff, RCMP, and Centre Staff notified - Warming centre supplies purchased - Public is notified via social media, web, and E-News - Warming centre is opened
Deactivation	Any of the prescribed conditions are no longer met.	- Safely shut down and clean facilities. - Inventory and secure supplies and equipment. - Apply for cost reimbursement through EMCR

1.9.4 Table 1. Activation Criteria Extreme Heat

	Criteria	Town Actions																								
Pre-season	N/A	• Staff participate in exercises and forums to discuss/improve collective response to extreme heat • Educational materials such as heat health information are shared																								
Extreme Heat Warning and Activation	• Environment Canada issues a Yellow, Orange, or Red Heat Warning. OR • Environment Canada forecasts temperatures for 2 or more consecutive days of any one of the below criteria: <table> <tr> <th>Daytime Max</th><th>Nighttime Min</th><th>Additional Condition</th></tr> <tr> <td>33°C</td><td>16°C</td><td>Air Quality Health Index 7 or higher</td></tr> <tr> <td>29°C</td><td>16°C</td><td>Relative Humidity 100%</td></tr> <tr> <td>30°C</td><td>16°C</td><td>Relative humidity 90%</td></tr> <tr> <td>31°C</td><td>16°C</td><td>Relative humidity 80%</td></tr> <tr> <td>32°C</td><td>16°C</td><td>Relative humidity 70%</td></tr> <tr> <td>33°C</td><td>16°C</td><td>Relative humidity 65%</td></tr> <tr> <td>34°C</td><td>16°C</td><td>Relative humidity 60%</td></tr> </table>	Daytime Max	Nighttime Min	Additional Condition	33°C	16°C	Air Quality Health Index 7 or higher	29°C	16°C	Relative Humidity 100%	30°C	16°C	Relative humidity 90%	31°C	16°C	Relative humidity 80%	32°C	16°C	Relative humidity 70%	33°C	16°C	Relative humidity 65%	34°C	16°C	Relative humidity 60%	• Task # requested from EMCR • Expenditure Authorization Forms (EAF) submitted to PREOC • Town staff, RCMP, and Centre Staff notified • Cooling centre supplies purchased • Public is notified via social media, web, and E-News • Cooling centre is opened
Daytime Max	Nighttime Min	Additional Condition																								
33°C	16°C	Air Quality Health Index 7 or higher																								
29°C	16°C	Relative Humidity 100%																								
30°C	16°C	Relative humidity 90%																								
31°C	16°C	Relative humidity 80%																								
32°C	16°C	Relative humidity 70%																								
33°C	16°C	Relative humidity 65%																								
34°C	16°C	Relative humidity 60%																								
Deactivation	• Any of the prescribed conditions are no longer met.	• Safely shut down and clean facilities. • Inventory and secure supplies and equipment. • Apply for cost reimbursement through EMCR																								

1.10 REFERENCES

British Columbia Centre for Disease Control. (2026). *BC Provincial Heat Alert and Response System (BC HARS): 2026*. BC Centre for Disease Control. Retrieved from [Provincial-Heat-Alerting-Response-System.pdf](#)

British Columbia Centre for Disease Control. (2023). *Public health recommendations to reduce the impacts of exposure to winter weather on people experiencing homelessness in British Columbia* [PDF]. Retrieved from http://www.bccdc.ca/resource-gallery/Documents/Guidelines%20and%20Forms/Guidelines%20and%20Manuals/Health-Environment/Recommendations_Exposure_Winter_Weather_People_Experiencing_Homelessness.pdf

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety. (2024, July 11). *Humidex rating and work*. OSH Answers Fact Sheets. https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/phys_agents/humidex.html

Health Canada. (2018). *Health impacts of air pollution*. Government of Canada. Retrieved August 21, 2025, from <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/healthy-living/health-impacts-air-pollution-2018.html>

APPENDIX A. WARMING CENTRE CRITERIA WHEN AN EXTREME WEATHER SHELTER IS UNAVAILABLE

	Criteria	Town Actions
Pre-season	N/A	- Staff participate in exercises and forums to discuss/improve collective response to extreme cold - Educational materials such as cold health information are shared
Extreme Cold Activation	- Environment Canada issues a Yellow, Orange, or Red Extreme Cold Warning OR - Environment Canada forecasts temperatures at or below 0°C; AND any one of the following conditions: - Significant snow accumulation or sleet/freezing rain conditions; - Significant windstorms that may present danger to persons living in wooded areas and/or makeshift shelters (tents); - Rainfall of at least 50mm in a 24-hour period or periods of extended heavy rain creating conditions of ground saturation; - Weather Alerts are issued by Environment Canada – wind warnings, excessive rain, snowfall warnings, storm surges in tidal areas, etc. OR - Environment Canada forecasts temperatures at or below -10°C	- Task # requested from EMCR - Expenditure Authorization Forms (EAF) submitted to PREOC - Town staff, RCMP, and Centre Staff notified - Warming centre supplies purchased - Public is notified via social media, web, and E-News - Warming centre is opened
Deactivation	Any of the prescribed conditions are no longer met.	- Safely shut down and clean facilities. - Inventory and secure supplies and equipment. - Apply for cost reimbursement through EMCR