



## **Frequently Asked Questions for Extreme Weather Events**

### **What is the activation criteria for hazardous weather sheltering?**

[City code](#) requires cooling spaces when temperatures are [forecast](#) by the National Weather Service to reach 95 degrees or higher for two or more days; safe air areas when the [Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency](#) forecasts the current air quality index to reach 201 (“very unhealthy”) or higher (“hazardous”); and warming centers when the temperature is predicted by the National Weather Service to be 32 degrees or lower and designated low-barrier shelter space was at 90% capacity or greater during the previous night.

### **How can the community help during extreme weather events?**

Just like we check on our neighbors, friends, and family during any challenging event, we need to do the same with hazardous weather. If you can help someone, please do. During heat waves this summer, donations of water, Gatorade and granola bars can be dropped off at the Trent Resource and Assistance Center, 4320 E. Trent Ave. Meanwhile, Meals on Wheels Spokane, 1222 W. Second Ave., is [accepting new or unopened fans](#) for Meals on Wheels Spokane clients.

### **Why are library locations utilized as cooling spaces (in addition to the Trent Resource and Assistance Center and other shelter locations)?**

- Located throughout the City, libraries provide convenient neighborhood access.
  - Central (906 W. Main St.), Shadle Park (2111 W. Wellesley Ave.), Liberty Park (402 S. Pittsburg St.), Hillyard (4110 N. Cook St.), South Hill (3324 S. Perry St.) and Indian Trail (4909 W. Barnes Road). Libraries are open 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday–Thursday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday–Saturday, and noon-4 p.m. Sunday. (Weekend hours may be extended, if needed.)
- Equipped with restrooms and drinking fountains as well as water bottle fillers.
- Provides free access to wi-fi connectivity, books, technology, and play areas.
- Libraries are always open to the public.
- Maximizing current facilities is cost-effective to provide relief to residents.
- It is a great opportunity for those who have never accessed libraries to learn more about them.

### **How many people can the libraries provide cooling space for?**

The total capacity for the six library locations available for cooling centers is 2,118.

### **Is there flex capacity at the Trent Resource and Assistance Center (TRAC) during hazardous weather events?**

Yes. TRAC, at 4320 E. Trent Ave., (509) 824-1415, has the capacity to flex this year during hazardous weather activations. Check <https://sheltermespokane.org> for updated citywide shelter occupancy information as reported by shelter operators. The Trent center has separated spaces for different

demographics to stay indoors out of the elements with access to showers, restrooms, and three meals daily. It also offers cool space, supplemental hydration resources and snacks.

### **What services is Spokane Transit Authority offering during hazardous weather?**

The Spokane Transit Authority Plaza downtown, 701 W. Riverside Ave., will serve as a temporary cooling and safe air center during activations and regular business hours of 5 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. Monday through Friday; 6 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. Saturday; and 6 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Sunday. STA will [offer fare exceptions](#) to riders going to and from a safe air center when the air quality index reaches 201 or more and a cooling center when the temperature is predicted to be 95 or higher. If a passenger boards a bus and indicates they do not have fare payment, and that they are traveling to or from a safe air or cooling center, STA will allow them to ride for free. This practice remains in effect for same-day return trips when the weather drops below the activation thresholds. Cooling areas are accessible by most Spokane Transit routes.

### **Are there any other free transportation options during extreme weather?**

Additionally, The Salvation Army offers vans that can meet people where they are at and help them connect to local shelters. Call 509-280-6860 or 509-280-6894 for a ride. If the drivers are driving, people can also call TRAC at (509) 824-1415 so shelter staff can direct drivers upon their return.

### **What resources are available at City parks during heat waves?**

Splash pads are great places to cool down for free. [Splash pads](#) are operational daily from 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. at 19 parks. The City's six aquatic centers offer free open swimming. The pools are open through August 23. Hours for open swim are Mondays – Saturdays, 1-4 p.m., with evening open swim available at rotational pools. Check the schedule, and sign up for your free Splash Pass at [SpokaneParks.org/aquatics](#). Visit the list of [drinking fountains in Parks](#). All efforts are made to keep splash pads, pools, and drinking fountains open, but on occasion, they may be closed due to vandalism or maintenance. Call [509.625.6960](#) to report any issues and to check hours and closures.

### **Why aren't schools being used for hazard sheltering?**

Most of the schools are already programmed with summer activities and don't have the staffing to accommodate the services needed on short notice with an undetermined amount of time.

### **What help is available for older adults or those with disabilities?**

If you are an older adult or living with a disability and need assistance during extreme weather or have safety concerns, contact Aging and Long Term Care's helpline for assistance at 509-960-7281. You can also visit <https://www.altcew.org/> to request a call from helpline staff.

### **How will people know these indoor locations are available during extreme weather activations?**

Information will be pushed out to media and to our network of partners to amplify the information.

- Local media releases
- City of Spokane website
- Social media and digital channels with City, Spokane Public Library, Spokane Parks and Recreation
- Human services partner outreach

## **Are there other resources besides the libraries, parks, the Trent Resource and Assistance Center and STA Plaza?**

Spokane has a great network of assistance.

- [Gonzaga University's regional cooling resources list](#)
- [My Spokane 311](#)
- [211](#)
- [Fig Tree - Directory - Community Resources](#)
- City's [Emergency Management](#) page
- [SNAP Homeless Resource Guide](#)
- City's [Hazard Sheltering page](#)
- [Gonzaga University's Smoke Ready Spokane Initiative](#)
- [Spokane Homeless Coalition](#)
- [Spokane Regional Health District](#)

## **How big of a concern is heat-related injuries or deaths?**

Heat was easily the leading [weather-related cause of deaths](#) in the nation in 2023, according to the National Weather Service.

## **What should people do during heat waves to avoid heat-related illnesses?**

Residents are urged to drink water, wear light-colored clothing, apply sunscreen and to not leave kids or pets in vehicles. They are also urged to take advantage of public cooling spaces such as libraries, the Trent Resource and Assistance Center, other shelters, Spokane Transit Authority Plaza, splash pads and malls.