

## Local Services

*In this section, please add details of local services for people experiencing homelessness during severe weather.*

*This should include cool spaces available during extreme heat, dry spaces available during storms and heavy rain, and information on accessing SWEP accommodation.*



## Keeping yourself safe in severe weather

Severe weather can be very dangerous, and in extreme cases, can cause death. This leaflet gives you some advice on keeping yourself safe and information about local services that can support you during severe weather.

### When it's freezing

**Hypothermia** occurs when your body temperature drops extremely low. Symptoms can include severe shivering, confusion, tiredness, and a fast heart rate. For moderate hypothermia, shivering can stop, and you may feel more confused, your speech may slur and in severe cases, you may lose consciousness.

If you feel like this, **call 999 for an ambulance immediately** or go to your nearest A&E if you are able to.

Whilst waiting, move to somewhere sheltered, remove any wet clothing, and use blankets/coats, covering your head to prevent heat loss.

## During a heatwave

**Heat exhaustion** is your body's response to an excessive loss of water and salt. Symptoms include paleness & sweating, rapid heart rate, muscle cramps, feeling/being sick & dizziness/fainting.

If you feel like this, lie down in a cool area, remove any outer clothing, hydrate, and use cool water to cool your skin.

**Heatstroke** is a condition caused by your body over-heating to a dangerously high temperature. It can be life-threatening and symptoms can include seizures, confusion, and unconsciousness.

If you feel like this, **call for an ambulance immediately**. Whilst you are waiting for help, follow the instructions for signs of heat exhaustion.

### Tips for keeping cool in the heat:

- Drink lots of water, even if you don't feel thirsty
- Apply suncream and seek shaded areas
- Avoid physical activity
- Avoid or limit alcohol, substances, caffeine and sugar
- Eat salty food to replace the salt lost through sweating

## During a storm

High winds can cause injuries from falling debris such as branches, roof materials and signage. Heavy rainfall can lead to flooding, which can increase the risk of accidents, and could expose you to contaminated water. This can be dangerous if you are sleeping outside.

Try and find a **dry, safe space**. Some day centres offer extended hours during very bad weather. A trusted friend or family member may be able to shelter you. Contact your local outreach team to find out if SWEP accommodation or a dry space is available. **Avoid sheltering in derelict buildings** or anywhere you could come to harm due to falling debris.

If you are bedding down **in your car** avoid parking under large trees and power lines, or in low lying areas prone to flooding.

Even in mild temperatures, high winds and heavy rainfall can increase your risk of hypothermia. Repeated exposure to stormy conditions can increase your risk of chest infections, pneumonia, and worsen any existing respiratory conditions, such as asthma or COPD.

If you develop new symptoms or existing ones get worse, seek medical advice from your **GP or pharmacist**. If you develop breathing difficulties or chest pain, **call for an ambulance immediately**.

Try to keep your feet dry and warm. If you don't have any **clean dry socks** ask a day centre or outreach worker to provide you with some.