



Maine Emergency Management Agency

Mass Care Preparedness

August 2023

“What If? Time for Reflection!”

In our ever-changing climate, the potential for disaster is increasing every day. Any look at daily media or articles, disasters are common. Disasters and Extreme Weather events are not just once-in-a-lifetime situations but, more commonly, everyday occurrences. It is essential to ask, “What If” our community experienced an extreme weather event or natural or human-caused disaster? Are we prepared to provide a safe place of refuge when needed? The following questions are provided to help answer the “What If’s” as it relates to Cooling and Warming Centers and Disaster/Emergency Shelters:

- Do I have a Disaster/Emergency Shelter Plan? If yes, is it still viable to utilize?
- Are primary and secondary Disaster/Emergency Shelter facilities identified in our community?
- Are the primary and secondary Disaster/Emergency Shelter facilities available for use?
- What resources are available to support Cooling and Warming Centers or Sheltering in our community?
- For those unable to Shelter, such as older people or those requiring medical care, are resources available to support Shelter in Place?
- During extreme heat and cold periods, are there identified Cooling and Warming Centers available to provide a safe place to escape the weather?
- Are facilities available and accessible for those most vulnerable in our community, such as the elderly, families with small children, ill, and unhoused individuals?

If the answer to any of the above questions is yes, you are one step ahead to being able to provide a safe place of refuge in the event of a Natural or Human-caused disaster or Extreme Weather event. If you answer no to any of the above questions, you still have time to plan. Any planning efforts taken now can go a long way to minimize the impact of a Natural or Human-Caused Disaster or Extreme Weather event.

If you need any assistance in planning for Cooling and Warming Centers or Disaster/Emergency Shelters, please reach out to Bill Guindon, MEMA Mass Care Coordinator, at 207-458-2867 or email william.guindon@maine.gov.

Please remember to report all Cooling and Warming Center or Disaster/Emergency Shelter Openings by email at: CenterShelter.OpenNotification@maine.gov.