



# City of Flagstaff

## News Release

February 10, 2017

For Immediate Release

### **Zero Winter Exposure Deaths in Flagstaff Reported in 2017 – Thank you Community!**

### **Keep up your awareness and continue to “Do Something”**

FLAGSTAFF, AZ – Thank you northern Arizona! In January 2017 there were zero winter exposure deaths reported in the City of Flagstaff despite the series of three significant winter storms that ranked in the top ten winter storm events in Flagstaff history.

Community awareness and community programs to reduce exposure deaths so far this year have proven successful. Please keep it up and continue your efforts to “do something” because winter is not over yet and when temperatures drop significantly below normal, staying warm and safe can be a challenge and during the cold winter months people are susceptible to exposure to the elements. We encourage the community that if you see someone in need of assistance because of winter exposure to do something and if necessary notify the police department at 911 or non-emergency 928-774-1414. Additionally, you can call the Crisis Response Network at 877-756-4090 for local resources or a crisis mobile response. Police Chief Kevin Treadway said “our officers are dedicated to protecting our citizens and often provide coats to those in need as well as shelter information.”

A complete Flagstaff Area Resource Guide list and information about weather exposure risks are also available at City the website ([www.flagstaff.az.gov/dosomething](http://www.flagstaff.az.gov/dosomething)). We encourage citizens to contact a service for weather exposure situations. There are many community resources and programs, below are a few highlights:

- Shelters
  - Flagstaff Shelter Services; 4185 E. Huntington Dr.; [www.flagshelter.org](http://www.flagshelter.org); 928-225-2533
  - Sunshine Rescue Mission; 117 S. San Francisco; [www.srm-hc.org](http://www.srm-hc.org); 928-774-3512
  - Northland Family Help Center; 2532 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St. #506; [www.northlandfamily.org](http://www.northlandfamily.org); 928-527-1900
- Programs/Resources
  - Catholic Charities: Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH); 2101 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St.; [rbrust@cc-az.org](mailto:rbrust@cc-az.org) or [www.catholiccharitiesaz.org/flagstaff](http://www.catholiccharitiesaz.org/flagstaff) ; 928-774-9125
  - Flagstaff Fire Department: All-Risk Unit and/or Community Alternate Response Truck (CART); [www.flagstaff.az.gov](http://www.flagstaff.az.gov); 928-213-2505
  - Northland Family Help Center: 2100 N Walgreens St; [www.northlandfamily.org](http://www.northlandfamily.org); (928) 527-1800
  - Crisis Response Network (CRN): 877-756-4090; [www.CrisisNetwork.org](http://www.CrisisNetwork.org)

Shelter and program volunteers are needed and training is available if you are interested in being involved and want more information visit the website [www.flagstaff.az.gov/dosomething](http://www.flagstaff.az.gov/dosomething) or contact the shelter or program directly.

City Manager, Josh Copley said “one exposure death is too many in our community and we are committed to providing resources and awareness to reduce the risks of winter exposure.” Copley added, “The Flagstaff City Council cares deeply about our northern Arizona community and wants to help bring awareness to this important issue and inform our residents and visitors that there are ways to help so no one is left out in the cold.”

Ross Altenbaugh, the Executive Director of Flagstaff Shelter Services (FSS), said “over the past three years, we have seen a 75% decrease in exposure deaths among individuals experiencing homelessness. A variety of critical partnerships in the community have been instrumental in this significant reduction. There is still work to be done to insure our neighbors are safe in the cold but we are thankful for all that has been done to serve this vulnerable group in our community.” FSS provides emergency shelter and life-saving resources to individuals experiencing homelessness; regardless of faith, sobriety or mental health. Additionally, FSS operates a winter overflow shelter in area congregations. This additional shelter capacity allows shelter staff to welcome anyone in need of shelter on any given night during the winter.

Flagstaff Fire Department Chief Gaillard, “FPD and FFD will work together and FPD will dispatch an FFD All-Risk Unit or the CART if an individual is in distress due to exposure and trained medical professionals will arrive on scene ready to help and quickly administer the appropriate care.”

Catholic Charities of northern Arizona search areas in town looking for those that may need help on cold and snowy nights and provides emergency supplies and hotel vouchers as well as other items. The City of Flagstaff provides Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to social service agencies that are administered by the housing section. Housing Director, Sarah Darr stated “we are proud to be a community partner within our Homeless Continuum of Care and to be able to provide funding to programs that serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness.”

Serious health problems can result from prolonged exposure to the cold, such as hypothermia and frostbite. The outer layer of clothing should be tightly woven, preferably wind resistant, to reduce body-heat loss caused by wind. Wool, silk, or polypropylene inner layers of clothing will hold more body heat than cotton. Stay dry—wet clothing chills the body rapidly. Sadly there have been exposure deaths in the northern Arizona community.

Please remember if you see someone at risk of winter exposure – do something!

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