



LAMBTON PUBLIC HEALTH

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NEWS RELEASE

Monday, February 2, 2015

For Immediate Release

Cold Weather Alert Issued for Lambton County

Point Edward, ON – Lambton's Medical Officer of Health has issued a **COLD WEATHER ALERT** for Lambton County based on the latest forecast from Environment Canada that predicts a temperature drop to -16°C tonight.

The alert, the fourth of the season, will remain in effect throughout the week. Temperatures will climb above the alert threshold on Tuesday but are expected to drop again on Wednesday and Thursday nights. The Medical Officer of Health will **not** issue a Cold Weather Alert termination.

Lambton Public Health advises local agencies that provide shelter and assistance to homeless people to prepare for an increase in demand during the Cold Weather Alert.

All residents should take precautions during a Cold Weather Alert by dressing in layers, shielding exposed areas from the wind such as head, neck and face, and limiting time spent outdoors.

Lambton's Medical Officer of Health issues a **Cold Weather Alert** when one or more of the following is met:

- Daily, low temperature is predicted to be -15°C or below, without a wind chill value.
- Environment Canada issues a wind chill warning for Lambton County.
- Extreme weather conditions, such as a blizzard or ice storm, are predicted.

Overexposure to cold can be hazardous, even life-threatening. Hypothermia, which can strike in any season, occurs when the body temperature drops below the normal range between 36.1°C and 37.8°C (97°F-100°F). Symptoms may include pale skin, lethargy, confusion, excessive shivering and hallucinations.

If someone is suffering from hypothermia:

- Seek immediate medical attention.
- Move person to a warm area, if possible; dress in warm clothing.
- Offer warm water, juice or milk.
- **Do not** offer alcohol or hot drinks.

Frostbite can occur in skin that is overexposed to cold temperatures. Symptoms of frostbite include skin turning red, blue, or a grey/white colour. Individuals may also experience pain, numbness and stiffness, especially in fingers, toes, ears and nose.

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If you suspect frostbite:

- Warm the skin next to the affected area or immerse in warm water. Do not use **hot** water.
- Do **not** rub the affected area.
- Seek immediate medical help.
- Re-warming may take up to 60 minutes.

Avoid hypothermia or frostbite:

- Check the weather forecast.
- Dress warmly. Wear several layers of warm, loose-fitting clothes.
- Protect your head and neck with a hat, scarf or hood: 30% of body heat escapes through the head.
- Protect your face with a mask.
- Wear wool socks and well-fitted boots that cover the ankles.
- Wear mittens. They protect hands better than gloves.
- Outermost layer of clothing should protect you from the wind.
- Stay dry. Wet clothing chills the body. Remove outer layers or open your coat if sweating.
- Drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.
- Avoid alcohol and caffeine.
- Limit outdoor activity.
- Know your limits. Children, seniors and those with circulation problems are more susceptible to cold.

For more information on severe cold weather, visit www.lambtonhealth.on.ca.

For more information about Lambton County, visit www.lambtononline.ca.

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