

Another Season Comes to a Close

Motel life will come to an end. Severe Weather Shelter Network will reintroduce shelter in church buildings in the fall of 2022.

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Motel Life verses Church Life

Severe Weather Shelter Network has partnered with local motels for the last two years to provide emergency shelter on life threatening winter nights. We are very grateful for those partnerships and the experience sheltering in motels provided.

We celebrate the lives we were able to save on those life-threatening winter nights. At the same time, we grieve the loss or lack of relationship with our guests. It is hard to build and sustain relationships through motel doors and brief encounters delivering meals.

We celebrate the opportunity to learn about how motels work, what is possible and what is not. We look forward to reintroducing emergency shelter in church buildings next fall where we have the opportunity to extend grace, to hold guests accountable and to build sustaining relationships with both volunteers and guests.

The last two years have been hard for everyone for many reasons. Life is beginning to normalize as we move into the “post-pandemic” phase. We value life more. We value freedom more. We value relationships more. Yes...it will be good to be together again. See you next fall!

Celebrating Our Guests!

Our wonderful guests have surrendered to making phone calls to get their names on the motel voucher list. It is a time consuming and anxiety producing experience. Thank you for your patience!

2022 Seasonal Updates

Our 2021 – 2022 Shelter season is finishing strong.

COVID has continued to have its impact this season keeping us sheltering in local motels. The very nature of this model and the constant waves of winter weather have significantly reduced the number of individuals we were able to serve.

We have sheltered 271 unique individuals this season. We are grateful for the opportunity!

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Jefferson County, Arapahoe County, Centennial, Lakewood, and Arvada all came together to provide funding that allowed us to continue necessary emergency shelter in local motels this season. Grant support totaled \$675,000. Not a penny was wasted!

11 local motels partnered with us to make room for our guests on life threatening winter nights.

As of the writing of this letter we have sheltered 55 nights this season. We have had more weather events of 6 nights or more than any other season on record for this ministry.

More than 200 volunteers have worked together to provide shelf stable food bags for our guests on Voucher days. Those same volunteers bagged more food and delivered them to guests in the motels over the course of the week or more our guests were in shelter.

Severe Weather Shelter Network found a rhythm that works for motel vouchers and shelter.

We hired additional staff to make sure our guests were registered and to make sure they had visits while they were in shelter.

As the season comes to an end, we recognize we are tired. It has been a lot!

And yet, we begin looking ahead to the fall of 2022 with anticipation.

Severe Weather Shelter Network will reintroduce congregate shelter in local church buildings in October 2022.

Plans are being laid for the ways in which we will continue to embrace deeper versions of Universal precautions and health protocols to keep everyone safe and healthy in shelter.

We are considering carefully which church buildings we will invite to partner with us and how those relationships are broadened in the coming season.

We look forward to seeing what God is going to do over the Spring and Summer to help us relaunch well.

I know you are part of the answer!



Severe Weather Shelter Network has always valued relationships and collaborative efforts in the community to provide necessary emergency shelter.

Please pray for and over us as we seek our next steps forward in a normalized world that is beginning to reemerge stronger than before.

A Season of Rebuilding

COVID has been like a long winter. In the wintertime animals hibernate, trees still their sap, everything goes dormant. Everything waits for the spring when the sun begins to warm the soil and new life begins to emerge.

Severe Weather Shelter Network volunteers and church partners have been in a season of dormancy. Waiting for the sun to shine on the soil and begin to emerge once again.

Over the spring and summer we will begin knocking on church doors to see who is still with us. We will knock on new doors to see who will join us. We are entering into a season of discovery and reemergence.

We will begin reaching out to volunteers who have served in the past and introduce them to the new ways in which we will engage shelter nights in the coming season. All are welcome to return...and bring a few friends with you!

In many ways we are beginning again.

For two years we have been away from the Church. For two years we have been cautious in our relationships to make sure our volunteers and guests stayed safe.

How many will return? How many churches closed their doors while we slept?

God has a plan. He always does.

We know we will continue to have three regions.

- North: Arvada & Wheat Ridge
- Central: Lakewood & Golden
- South: Englewood, Sheridan, and Littleton

We know we will provide shelter in church buildings and invite volunteers to help staff those sites on severe weather nights.

We know we will need the use of church buildings to host warming sites.

We know the number of people experiencing homelessness in those regions have exponentially grown because of COVIDs impact.

Will you join us rebuilding in preparation for October 2022?

Here are a few specific things you can do right now:

- Pray for God's leading and faithful provision
- Consider how you are being invited to volunteer your time
- Consider in what way you are being invited to financially support the work we are doing together

Reach out to Christy Smith to let her know in what ways you will give of your time and resources.

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Let me introduce you to Severe Weather Shelter Network...

It's been a hot minute since we last spoke. Over the next three weeks I will be sharing our values to reintroduce you to the work and ministry of Severe Weather Shelter Network.

Refuge, Relationship and Restoration. Our tag line gives a short glimpse.

Our values are based on the acronym of Refuge. There is a Bible passage that goes with each letter to help define and deepen

our understanding of the reason behind our service.

You will have various opportunities given to you over the next three weeks:

- Make a financial commitment to support our emergency shelter work
- Sign up to volunteer your time and talents to support our emergency shelter work

- Act as a doorman and open doors to new connections that will help us provide emergency shelter next winter.

We know it will take all of us working together in every way to reintroduce Severe Weather Shelter Network to the broader community.

Thank you in advance for your help in getting the word out!

Rebuilding REFUGE March 28 – April 15, 2022

An online campaign supporting and building places of Refuge.

Severe Weather Shelter Network is hosting **Rebuilding REFUGE** to raise necessary funding for the work to which we have been called.

You can help us raise \$50,000 by:

1. Making a financial gift through our website
2. Become an influencer by inviting others in your Network to give
3. Ask your Employer about matching gifts
4. Invite your Church or Community organization to share **Rebuilding REFUGE** with their members

For more information contact us by:

Contacting our Executive Director at: lynnann@swshelternetwork.com

Phone: 720-362-7058

Or going to our website at: <https://www.swshelternetwork.com>



Severe Weather Shelter Network is a nonprofit organization under IRS code 501c3. All financial gifts are deductible according to IRS guidelines.

Severe Weather Shelter Network

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