



Battling Extreme Weather Without a Home

As cold winds batter the northeast and temperatures drop below freezing during the winter months, people across the United States are moving indoors for safety. These plummeting temperatures have led to the loss of power for millions across the nation. For those who lack proper shelter, however, this change in weather engenders a grim reality.

During the snowstorms that battered Texas last month, thousands of homeless people sought refuge in emergency shelters throughout the state. These shelters provide basic necessities, like bedding, warm clothing, and hygiene supplies. Not everyone without shelter was able to seek refuge, though. Due to high numbers of homeless people in large cities, as well as new COVID-19 restrictions that limit the number of guests admitted to shelters, many people without housing had nowhere to go for warmth.

This was especially true in Dallas, Texas. Shelters in the city [filled to maximum capacity](#) on February 12. Homeless people in the city, therefore, were forced to bear life-threatening temperatures without the hope or even the possibility of escaping the weather. Fortunately, non-profit organizations, such as Dallas Stops Evictions and Feed the People DFW, rose to the occasion. These organizations collected money to pay for temporary housing for the homeless. This initiative placed over 24 homeless people into motels.

Without the hard work of nonprofits or the generosity of those who donated for the cause, many homeless people would have gone without warmth or safety from the extreme and life-threatening weather conditions. It is fortunate that there were people who were willing to help,

but this instance still raises a vital question: What would have happened if no one had stepped up?

This weather crisis exposes how much work needs to be done regarding homeless shelters and emergency preparedness. Despite the non-profits' work, [at least six homeless people died](#) because of the storm, with the total number of casualties still unknown. As Vanessa Willmore, [founder of Feed the People DFW, stated](#), "If this does not wake people up about how the government treats us, I don't know what will."

By Nicole Alesso