

St Vincent de Paul Opens Warming Center

Director Jeff Conroy/St. Vincent de Paul

There has been a lot of concern about St Vincent de Paul North Idaho's 7 year Warming Center policy about open our doors to the Center when the temperature fall below 25 degrees. In making this decision it was painful because we feel that anything below 32 is too cold and we are in the "people" business. But we are self-funded. We hold events throughout the year to help fund our Center. Our Center DOES NOT receive funding from government agencies like Spokane. These funds pay for staff, washing sleeping bags, buying sleeping bags, tents, food, heat, water, and anything else needed to support the Center that is not covered by donations.

We've been asked "why don't you just have volunteers run it"? Because working 12 hour shifts from 7:00pm to 7:00am is very stressful on anyone, we operate our Center with staff and have volunteers supporting to ensure enough coverage during long stretches of cold. We are always looking for donations of food, and clothing.

After conversations with local officials we will raise our temperature to 28 degrees effective immediately, which will add average 36 more nights to our season (based on 2014 temperatures). Daily the decision will be made to open or not based on the temperatures.

So, the St Vincent de Paul North Idaho Warming Center is going to reopen Friday evening, December 18 through Saturday evening, December 19. Future nights will be extended as extreme cold persists.

NO MATTER WHAT we will be open Christmas Eve, Christmas, New Year's Eve and New Year's.

The Post Falls Shelter located at 202 W. 7th Street in Post Falls, behind the Post Falls St Vincent de Paul Thrift Store, in the Kamps Apartment basement. Transportation will be leaving from the St Vincent de Paul Community Dining Hall at 6:30pm on the nights we are open, and will transport back the next morning.

St Vincent de Paul is able to shelter 45 individuals and will have available sleeping bags, blankets, gloves, stocking caps, coats, a full bathrooms, warm food and drinks. The Coeur d'Alene site will be used as overflow.

A huge Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to donate sleeping bags, blankets, and food. Thank you to the churches and families who have been bringing warm meals to use. Everything has been so appreciated by those we serve. We also want to thank both the Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene Police and Fire Departments for working with us and supporting what we're doing. And thank you Post Falls Mayor Jacobson and Coeur d'Alene Mayor Widmyer for keeping the lines of communication open.

If you are able to help or donate please contact Warming Center Coordinator Ben 208-771-5396.