

final thoughts...

While the Safe & Warm Emergency Cold Weather Shelter is temporary in nature, the need to provide housing options for the absolute homeless in Brandon is not.

The Power of Partnerships...

Samaritan House Ministries Inc. was able to secure funding through the National Homelessness Partnering Strategy enabling the organization to hire support workers to work with Safe & Warm Emergency Cold Weather Shelter clients. The support workers concentrated on developing plans to assist shelter users to move towards independent living and ensuring that they were connected with the appropriate resources. These support workers were able to devote time to getting to know those seeking shelter and better understand their needs, enabling them to make better community service referrals and connections to more permanent housing options.



Part of the day to day operations of the Cold Weather Emergency Shelter is the provision of clean linens. This is made possible by the generosity of Brandon Police Services who pick up and drop off shelter linens and Glacier Wash of Brandon whose staff wash and dry the linens at no cost.

7th Street Health Access Centre's Housing Resource Workers fulfill the daily intake process for those seeking shelter in the Safe & Warm Emergency Cold Weather Shelter and begin the process of assisting those seeking shelter to move towards longer term housing solutions.

Volunteers and partner agency staff looked after all operational logistics including intake, cleaning of linens, provision of shelter supplies, hiring security, public communications, fundraising and financial accounting of the shelter operations. Security staff was the only operational item that required cash donations and grants to fund.

Shelter Overview

Those requiring emergency shelter were required to register with the Housing Resource Workers at 7th Street Health Access Centre by 7 p.m. An intake process was completed and staff established the initial connection necessary to begin assisting the individual in working towards a longer term housing solution. A key goal of the intake process was to identify individuals who were interested in accessing Housing First programs.

The Shelter opened daily from 7 p.m. – 7 a.m. from December 1st, 2014 to March 14th, 2015 and was staffed by two paid security guards. Those that were registered for overnight shelter made their way to the shelter after 7th Street Health Access Centre closed at 7 p.m. Very basic amenities such as water, access to a washroom, a container to store any belongings, clean bedding and a sleeping mat were provided. For those that did not register with 7th Street Health Access Centre, their only means of accessing the shelter after 7 p.m. was through Brandon Police Service. Exiting and re-entering the shelter throughout the evening was not permitted for security reasons. Therefore individuals wishing overnight shelter, once checked in to the shelter, needed to remain or find alternate shelter for the evening. Prior to the 7 a.m. closure, individuals who spent the night assisted in cleanup so that the premise was left in the state it was at opening.



Fulfilling the most basic of needs, safe shelter during the coldest time of the year.



2014/2015 Safe & Warm Cold Weather Emergency Shelter Year in Review



Quick Facts

- 54 individuals accessed the shelter, 46 of whom sought overnight shelter more than once.
- The shelter was open 105 days and provided 329 shelter bed nights in total.
- 11 individuals who accessed the shelter were able to secure longer term housing (20% success rate)
- The planning, coordination and operation of the emergency shelter this winter consumed close to 1,000 volunteer hours.

United in a Common Vision.....

Through support from the United Way of Brandon & District, the City of Brandon, donations of cash and in kind from many private organizations and individuals; and the tireless work of the volunteer Safe and Warm Committee; safe emergency shelter was provided to Brandon's absolute homeless this winter.

Samaritan House Ministries Inc. generously provided at no cost, space in their Pacific Avenue location for the shelter, enabling the shelter to operate consistently from one location, reducing confusion for those seeking shelter.

When the shelter closed in March, the need for housing did not go away. Shelter users are now back to couch surfing or spending the night outdoors.

The Safe and Warm Emergency Cold Weather Shelter was established and operated for the past three years by a volunteer committee. Samaritan House Ministries Inc., who has been an active member of the committee since inception has generously offered to incorporate the operation of the shelter into the organization's programming and services offered. The Safe & Warm Committee is thrilled to have a legally established organization add the emergency cold weather shelter into its core service offerings. The transition of operational responsibility is underway and many of the founding Safe & Warm Committee members will remain involved in an advisory capacity. Despite having achieved organizational support for the shelter, sufficient funding for the shelter will remain an ongoing challenge.

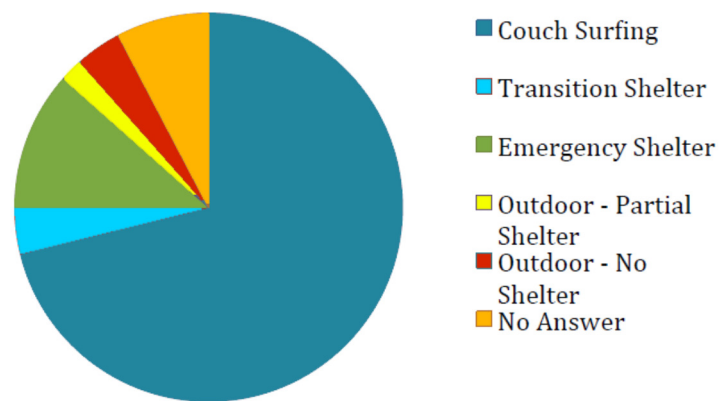
Homelessness in Brandon is Real!

For years the debate has ensued within the community as to whether homelessness in Brandon is a problem. With a rental vacancy rate that has hovered at or below 1% for the past decade, emergency and transitional housing units full, and increasing rental rates, some of those with limited means and/or barriers to securing housing have no choice but to live with no fixed address. While this is far from ideal at any time of the year, during the cold Manitoba winters, this situation becomes life threatening.

On January 21st, 2015 a [Point-in-Time Homeless Count](#) was conducted in Brandon. Below are a few of the resulting statistics. The statics are from a single point in time and should be considered a minimum number at best. Much like an iceberg, only the homeless that were readily visible were counted.

- 117 Homeless, 41 of which were sheltered and 76 were without shelter on January 21st.
- Greater than 35% of respondents have been homeless for more than a year
- 30% of respondents had visited the emergency room in the past year
- 1 in 4 respondents indicated they had a mental illness.
- 1 in 4 respondents indicated they struggled with addiction.
- 1/3 of respondents were women and of those 20% had children under the age of 5 with them.
- Nearly half of all respondents were under the age of 30.

Where Brandon's Homeless Sleep



In 2014 CMHA Western MB Region Inc. alone provided emergency shelter for 124 homeless individuals including 19 families. Due to demand exceeding available space in CMHA's shelter units, 386 individuals and 66 families who sought emergency shelter were turned away.

Financial Overview

The Safe & Warm Emergency Cold Weather Shelter relies solely on volunteer resources and donations from individuals, agencies and businesses to operate. Safe & Warm Committee members applied for grants from a variety of foundations and agencies, some were successful, while others were denied. With the exception of paid security and very limited shelter supplies, all operating costs were provided in kind.

Revenue	
Cash in Bank	\$5,892
Grants	\$21,702
Donations	\$40,470
In Kind volunteer time	\$ 23,000
In Kind supplies & services	\$4,645
Total Revenue	\$95,709
Expenses	
Administration (In-kind volunteer time)	\$23,000
Laundry	\$1,350
Refreshments / supplies / marketing	\$1,940
Rent & utilities	\$1,500
Security	\$44,542
Total Expenses	\$ 72,332
Revenue less Expenses	\$23,377

Fundraising

Operating the Safe & Warm Emergency Cold Weather Shelter is solely dependent upon raising sufficient funds to enable us to do so.

Please consider giving the gift of Shelter.

Donations can be made via cheque, in person or online at www.canadahelps.org

Cheques should be written to Samaritan House Ministries Inc. Tax receipts are provided.

Samaritan House Ministries
820 Pacific Avenue
Brandon, MB R7A 0J1

Open: Monday – Friday 8:30 – 4:30 p.m. and open till 6 p.m. on Tuesdays.

Safe & Warm Committee Members

- Barbara McNish & Thea Dennis, Samaritan House Ministries Inc.
- Chenessa McLennan, Michelle Funk-Haney, Penny McKinnon, Wynn Collier, Chris Reid, Vicky Legassie, & Sandra Koch, 7th Street Health Access Centre
- Debbie Coombs-Dandy, Churches
- Greg Steele
- Jim Hillis, Jack Hamm, & Douglas Orr, Helping Hands
- Jodi Roney
- Kim Sollner, John Howard Society
- Marie Berard, Brandon Friendship Centre
- Mark Anderson
- Rhonda Smith, Salvation Army (Chairperson)
- Sandy Trudel, Grant McKay & Trevor Robins, City of Brandon

Thank You!

A heart felt thank you to this year's Safe & Warm Cold Weather Emergency Shelter funders. Providing shelter to the absolute homeless would not be possible without your support.

- ☺ Brandon & District United Way
- ☺ Brandon Churches & Service Clubs
- ☺ City of Brandon
- ☺ Community & Corporate Donations
- ☺ Manitoba Real Estate Association
- ☺ Province of MB, Neighbourhoods Alive

For More Information:

2014/2015 Shelter Year - Rhonda Smith at 204.727.6271

2015-2016 Shelter Year – Thea Dennis at 204.726.0758 or exec@samaritanhouse.net