



Safety Resource Guide

Extreme Weather Event and Emergency Preparedness for Hunger Relief Partners

Contents

Why This Matters	1
Reminders	1
Before an Emergency	2
Preparedness Checklist	2
How to Set Up a Call Tree	2
In an Emergency	3
Fire or Immediate Risk	3
Extreme Heat	3
Poor Air Quality or Smoke	4
Corsi-Rosenthal Box	4
Communication Tips	5
After an Event	5
Emergency Preparedness Tools & Resources	6
Ready Rating Program (American Red Cross)	6
Ready.gov	6
Language Resources	6
Language Justice Grants	7
Pocketalk Translation Devices	7
Telecom Relay Services (TRS)	7
Closing Reminder	7



Why This Matters

Across Colorado and Wyoming, extreme weather conditions, including wildfires, high heat, and poor air quality, can impact how neighbors access food and how safely we are able to operate.

This guide offers simple, practical steps to help you:

- Plan safety procedures for staff, volunteers, and neighbors
- Maintain access to food during weather disruptions
- Maintain trust and respect with your community during uncertain conditions

Reminders

1. Safety Comes First

Personal safety outweighs operational efficiency. Remember:

- Distributions may be paused or adjusted if safety concerns arise
- Staff and volunteers should remain calm and composed
- Clear internal communication reduces confusion during stressful moments

This aligns with existing Food Bank of the Rockies response protocols

2. Prepare in Advance

In preparation for weather events, consider:

- Increasing shelf-stable inventory
- Preparing food boxes in advance
- Including household essentials where feasible
- Ensuring quantities distributed support longer use between visits

The goal is to reduce trips if travel may be impacted or conditions are dangerous.

Before an Emergency

Small steps ahead of time can make a big difference.

Preparedness Checklist	How to Set Up a Call Tree
<p>Have a simple plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Identify a point person for emergency decisions ❑ Know your closest evacuation routes ❑ Keep a list of partner contacts and emergency numbers 	<p>1. Start with a lead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Choose 1–2 people to start the communication (e.g., Site Lead or Coordinator) <p>2. Create small groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Each person is responsible for contacting 2–4 people ❑ Keep it manageable so no one is overwhelmed <p>3. Map it out</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Site Lead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Volunteer Lead → Volunteer A, Volunteer B → Staff Lead → Staff A, Staff B <p>4. Collect contact info</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Name ❑ Phone number (call + text) ❑ Preferred language (if applicable)
<p>Prepare your space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Keep exits clear and accessible ❑ Ensure fire extinguishers are visible and up to date ❑ Store important documents in an easy-to-grab location 	
<p>Communicate early:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Let neighbors know how you'll share updates (text, signage, social media, etc.) ❑ Plan ahead for language services and translations 	

Fire or Immediate Risk

Your safety and your community's safety come first.

If evacuation is needed:

- Follow local guidance immediately:
 - [Colorado Hazard Information Wildfire](#)
- Do not delay to pack up or finish a distribution

If sheltering in place:

- Keep everyone informed and calm
- Monitor local alerts (phone, radio, official sources)

Extreme Heat Events

Individuals, communities, and businesses can plan for and reduce the effects of extreme heat.

Immediate actions:

- Call 911 in case of heat-related illness
- [Check weather alerts and warnings](#) from the National Weather Service

If the power goes out:

- Use generators only outdoors and away from doors, windows, and vents

Learn more about how to prepare for [extreme heat events](#).

When in doubt, prioritize safety and close operations.

Note: Adapted from *Exhausted by Summer Heat*, by Glacial Ridge Health, 2024, glacialridge.org/exhausted-summer-heat

The infographic is divided into two main sections: 'HEAT EXHAUSTION OR HEAT STROKE' and 'FIRST AID'. The top section features a central sun icon and two columns of symptoms. The left column lists symptoms for Heat Exhaustion: dizziness/fainting, intense thirst, excessive sweating, rapid weak pulse, nausea/vomit, pale/cold/clammy skin, and muscle cramps/fatigue. The right column lists symptoms for Heat Stroke: headache/confusion, elevated body temperature, no sweating, rapid strong pulse, nausea/vomit, red hot skin, and may lose consciousness. The bottom section, titled 'FIRST AID', provides five actions: move to a cooler place, drink water if able, take a cold shower, use cold compresses, and call emergency service. It also includes a 'WHO IS MORE AT RISK' section with icons for older adults, children, people with disabilities, outdoor workers, and people with certain chronic illnesses.

HEAT EXHAUSTION	OR	HEAT STROKE
DIZZINESS, FAINTING		HEADACHE, CONFUSION
INTENSE THIRST		ELEVATED BODY TEMPERATURE
EXCESSIVE SWEATING		NO SWEATING
RAPID WEAK PULSE		RAPID STRONG PULSE
NAUSEA, VOMIT		NAUSEA, VOMIT
PALE, COLD, CLAMMY SKIN		RED HOT SKIN
MUSCLE CRAMPS, FATIGUE		MAY LOSE CONSCIOUSNESS

FIRST AID

- MOVE TO A COOLER PLACE
- DRINK WATER IF ABLE
- TAKE A COLD SHOWER
- USE COLD COMPRESSES
- CALL EMERGENCY SERVICE
- TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION TO COOL THE PERSON

WHO IS MORE AT RISK

- OLDER ADULTS
- CHILDREN
- PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
- OUTDOOR WORKERS
- PEOPLE WITH CERTAIN CHRONIC ILLNESSES

Poor Air Quality or Smoke

Wildfires and extreme heat events can impact air quality.

During wildfire season or on poor air quality days, simple tools can make a big difference.

- Link: [Check local air quality](#) as hot weather can worsen ozone levels and other types of air factors
- Link: [Learn how carbon monoxide impacts indoor air quality](#)

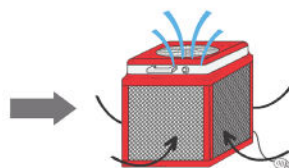
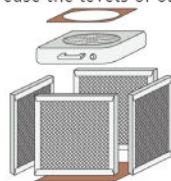
Corsi-Rosenthal Box

The Corsi-Rosenthal Box is a simple, affordable, DIY air filter that helps improve indoor air quality by reducing smoke, dust, and airborne particles.

This setup has been shown to be highly effective at filtering air and can be a practical alternative when upgrading HVAC systems isn't possible.

HOW TO BUILD A CORSI-ROSENTHAL BOX

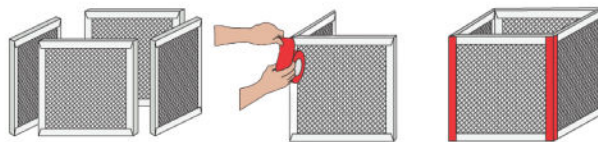
The Corsi-Rosenthal Box is an affordable DIY air-cleaning system made with simple materials found in hardware stores. The box fan pulls air through the filters on the sides and blows out clean air. It is proven to reduce indoor exposure to airborne particles, including those containing the virus that causes COVID-19. The box can also decrease the levels of other particles in the air, such as dust or wildfire smoke.



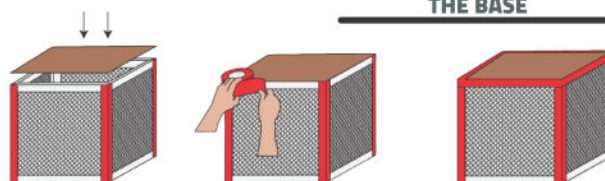
- Filters can last up to a year
- Keep away from walls and corners



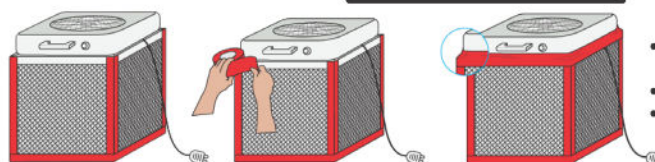
- 4 Filters: 3M MPR 1900 (20" x 20" x 1" or 20" x 25" x 1") or MERV 13 (20" x 20" x 2" or 20" x 20" x 1" or 20" x 25" x 2" or 20" x 25" x 1" [2-inch preferred])
- Lasko or Mainstays 20-inch Box Fan
- Scissors, Utility Knife, Duct Tape



- Arrange the filters to create a symmetrical structure
- Ensure the arrows are pointing inwards
- Duct tape the four edges
- Vertical orientation of the pleats is preferred



- Use one side of the fan's cardboard box
- Cut the cardboard to fit the base of the cube
- Duct tape it on all four sides



- Place the fan on top of the cube (air must blow upward)
- Seal all sides, including corners
- Ensure any holes on the side of the fan are sealed off with duct tape



- Cut the other cardboard sheet to fit the top of the fan
- Cut a circular hole (Diameter: 15" for Lasko and 16" for Mainstays)
- Place the shroud on the fan and tape it on all four sides
- The shroud increases efficiency and decreases the noise level

This work is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

Illustrator: Marija Mladenović Creator: Shiven Taneja

Communication Tips

Clear communication helps reduce confusion and builds trust during emergencies by ensuring people know what to expect, what actions to take, and where to get reliable information. When communication is consistent, accessible, and timely, it helps staff, volunteers, and neighbors feel informed and supported to prepare for safety.

- Keep messages short, clear, and consistent
- Share the same information across all channels to avoid confusion
- Use multiple formats:
 - Verbal (in-person updates)
 - Printed (signage, flyers)
 - Digital (text, email, social media)
- Translate when possible or use tools like Pocketalk
- Repeat key messages as people may not hear it the first time
- Clearly state:
 - What is happening
 - What actions people should take
 - When to expect updates

After an Event

Taking time to reflect after an extreme weather event helps strengthen future responses and supports your team.

- Check in with staff and volunteers
- Ensure everyone is safe and has what they need
- Ask:
 - ❑ What worked well?
 - ❑ What challenges did we face?
 - ❑ What should we do differently next time?
- Document key updates or changes to your plan
- Restock supplies and prepare for future events
- Share learnings with other partners to support the broader network

Tip: Even small improvements can make a big difference in future emergencies.

Emergency Preparedness Tools & Resources

Ready Rating Program (American Red Cross)

The Ready Rating Program is a free tool designed to help organizations strengthen their emergency preparedness. It offers self-assessments, planning templates, and practical resources to evaluate readiness and improve response capabilities.

Partners can use the Ready Rating Program to:

- Assess current preparedness levels
- Create or strengthen an emergency action plan
- Access checklists, tools, and planning resources



readyrating.org

Ready.gov (U.S. Department of Homeland Security)

Ready.gov provides trusted, easy-to-understand guidance on preparing for a wide range of emergencies, including wildfires, severe weather, and power outages.

Partners can use Ready.gov to:

- Build emergency plans
- Create supply kits
- Access hazard-specific guidance (wildfire, wind, flooding, etc.)
- Stay informed with alerts and preparedness tips



Language Resources

Please see below for a list of recommended vendors for translation, interpretation services, and language grants.

- **Community Language Cooperative:** communitylanguagecoop.com

Denver-based organization that offers written translation services as well as live interpreters for events and Zoom calls. Can source most major languages with a 48-hour notice; prices average about 20 cents per translated word.

- **Voiance:** interpret.voiance.com/language-services

A subscription service that offers on-call live interpretation with staff who speak over 240 languages through their video app. Pricing begins at .99 cents per minute, with the first 25 minutes included with the \$25 monthly subscription fee.

- **Language Justice Grants:**

The local, state, and federal government may offer small grants for translation or interpretation services. We often include notices about these opportunities in our monthly partner newsletter.

- **Pocketalk Translation Devices***

Available to support your organization in addressing language barriers

** These devices are available via Food Bank of the Rockies when not in use by other programs*

- **Telecom Relay Services (TRS): fcc.gov/trs**

Relay Colorado: hamiltonrelay.com/colorado

Relay Colorado is a free service that provides full telephone access to people who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, or speech disabled. Relay Colorado allows text-telephone* (TTY) users to communicate with traditional telephone users through trained relay operators. The operator will dial the requested number and relay the conversation between the two callers. The service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and there are not any restrictions on the number or length of calls. All calls are confidential and records of conversations are not kept.

How To Connect – Dial 711

Dial 711 to use Hamilton Relay in Colorado or call one of the toll-free numbers below:

Service Type	Phone Number
TTY/Telebraille/HCO:	800-659-2656
Voice:	800-659-3656
VCO (Voice Carry Over):	877-659-8260
Speech-to-Speech:	877-659-4276
Spanish:	800-337-3242

If you are traveling out of State or you are in a State that is not served by Hamilton Relay, you can place interstate calls by calling:

Voice: [800-833-7833](tel:800-833-7833) (toll-free)

TTY: [800-833-5833](tel:800-833-5833) (toll-free)

Closing Reminder

These tips reflect experiences shared by other organizations navigating periods of extreme weather events or emergencies. These are not mandates nor legal guidance. Each partner should determine what adjustments, if any, are appropriate for their organization and community. Food Bank of the Rockies remains committed to supporting you as we continue to nourish our neighbors safely, respectfully, and with dignity.