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## **What is the Elgin Recreation Center, what is an emergency shelter and what is a warming center?**

Elgin, Texas - The City of Elgin Recreation Center located at 361 State Highway 95 was funded in part by a grant that supported the facility being available to be used as an emergency shelter. On a daily basis the facility is a recreation center operated by the City of Elgin. Emergency shelters are activated when there is an emergency event that has a widespread impact on the community and displaces people from their homes. An emergency shelter provides food, water, bedding, shower and restroom facilities, basic medical and support services and is a shelter for 24 hours a day until the need for it has passed. It requires additional staff and coordination with emergency management services through the county and the state of Texas.

The Elgin Recreation Center can be called into use as an emergency shelter by the governor, the Bastrop County judge, and the City of Elgin. The facility has been opened as an emergency shelter and is available for that use. A number of considerations come into play when determining if the facility needs to open as an emergency shelter. First it must be determined that an emergency exists. This declaration may come from the Governor or County Judge and may be to operate the facility as an emergency shelter for individuals not located in the Elgin area, to respond to an emergency situation that has occurred elsewhere, or may be related to one in Elgin.

Severe, inclement weather does not require the opening of an emergency shelter. Severe, inclement, or winter weather that has a widespread impact on the community and displaces people from their homes, may create a need for an emergency shelter. The City of Elgin works with the Bastrop County Office of Emergency Management to determine if there are local or countywide needs that constitute an emergency that merits opening the recreation center as an emergency shelter. What is a warming center? A warming center is a safe place where anyone in the community can come inside to get temporary relief from the cold weather during normal operating hours. The City of Elgin library is an example of a warming center.

During extreme winter weather it is often safer for individuals to remain in place while power outages are being addressed than to travel in icy road conditions. A warming center is not an emergency shelter, and is not what emergency shelters are designed to address.

The City of Elgin has received no requests for emergency shelter from Bastrop County or individual citizens. The City of Elgin has received no requests for a warming center from Bastrop County or any individual citizen.

Individuals with special needs or who feel unsafe in their location can reach out to the Elgin Police Department by calling 911 and options for support will be addressed.

Emergency news and information is available at [www.elgintexas.gov](http://www.elgintexas.gov) and on social media @MyElginTx @BastropCountyOEM