

Shelter opens during freeze

Meteorologist predicts warmer temperatures for this weekend

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For most of Acadiana, freezing temperatures mean it's time to protect the three 'p's' - pipes, pets and plants - but for some there is a much more important 'p' to protect on these frigid nights - people.

The Acadiana Outreach Center has enacted its freeze plan as temperatures in Acadiana plummet 10 degrees below the average for this time of year to a low of 24 degrees just before sunrise today.

The center opened their doors to those seeking shelter from the cold Tuesday and Wednesday night and if the temperatures dip as low as expected tonight - down to 29 degrees overnight - they could open those doors again.

Meteorologist Lance Escude with the National Weather Service in Lake Charles said there will be 12 hours of below freezing temperatures from Wednesday night until today when temperatures rise to about 50, which is 10 degrees below normal for this time of year.



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A low below freezing Thursday night leads into a warmer Friday as a cold area of pressure moves east allowing warm gulf air to move across the region bringing temperatures into the low 60s Friday with a Friday night low of about 50 degrees. Lafayette will wake to much warmer temperatures Saturday at about 50 degrees.

Caroline Morain covers plants at her home on Alonda Drive on Wednesday afternoon in preparation for frigid overnight temperatures.

"The warm up really takes hold for the weekend with temperatures in the lower 70s Saturday through Tuesday," Escude said.

He said during freezing temperatures people must remember to protect their pipes, plants and pets.

At Acadiana Outreach Center there are dozens of people to protect from the cold, according to community relations associate Jesse Guidry. He said Tuesday night brought in 20 to 30 people seeking shelter from the cold and more were expected Wednesday night. He said the center needs "anything to help keep people warm" and fed.