

This is Lieutenant Roger McCort from The Salvation Army in Eureka with today's Community Comment.

I need a building. Do you have one?

Let me explain.

The temperature on the Northern California coast during the winter is just over 50 degrees during the day and about 40 at night, though it gets much colder at times. Add in some wind and rain, or that thick layer of winter fog which often enshrouds our part of the world, and those temperatures take on a special, deadly level of danger.

A condition called hypothermia can happen to any human being. That's when your usual ninety-eight-point-six-Fahrenheit core temperature drops by just two percent to ninety-five or below. When that happens, you get confused and start to shiver. Your words start to slur. You might feel tired or heavy, like if you could just sit down and catch your breath everything would be all right.

You've got gloves to keep your fingers warm and a gift card to your favorite coffee shop too!

For most of us, the cold of a winter season is an abstract idea, not a concrete reality. But for hundreds of Nor-Cal residents who live in their vehicles or on the streets, it's a constant danger to their health. Especially when you look at the list of complicating factors for hypothermia: Older and younger ages – the highest percentage of people on the streets – are more susceptible to the cold. People with mental problems really may not know to come inside, and often they have nowhere to go. And those who have alcohol or drug addiction problems have already damaged their bodies and are both more likely to succumb to the cold and less likely to seek help because of the shame and stigma of their situation.

Because I believe in the inherent value of every person and because I believe that even a person who has a lifetime

\*Probably, but this depends on factors I am not qualified to assess!