

2021 Winter Weather Event Action Plan: Emergency Permitting and Inspections Development Services Department (DSD)



Goal:

Deliver exceptional customer service to the Austin community in support of emergency repair needs as a result of the 2021 winter weather event

Action Plan

Online Assistance:

- DSD is creating an emergency repairs web page that provides targeted information about repairs that are typical in the event of a weather emergency.
- The web page will include information regarding:
 - Which work types require a permit and which work types do not;
 - How to proceed with permitting for an emergency repair; and,
 - How to connect with a DSD representative for help with securing the permit.
- Web page will be live Friday, February 19. <http://austintexas.gov/page/emergency-repairs>

In-Person Assistance (3-1-1):

- DSD is partnering with 3-1-1.
- 3-1-1 will address with front-end customer assistance needs and answer questions for which information is available on the emergency repairs web page, including:
 - Which work types require a permit and which work types do not;
 - How to proceed with permitting for an emergency repair; and,
 - How to connect with a DSD representative for assistance with securing the permit.
- All other questions will be referred to the DSD customer assistance team for response.
- 3-1-1 support will be in place on Friday, February 19.

In-Person Assistance (DSD Customer Assistance Team):

- DSD has created a multi-call phone line that will be dedicated to providing in-person (over the phone) services to applicants in need of information regarding emergency repairs.
- The phone number is (512) 974-1500.
- The phone line will connect to the computers of a designated remote customer assistance team that includes five of DSD's most experienced Customer Service Representatives who will respond to inquiries and aim for "First Call Resolution".

- For inquiries that require additional information, the customer assistance team will contact a designated group of inspection supervisors (7 plumbing/ 4 electrical) on behalf of the applicant to ensure a timely response.
- DSD will also assign a Customer Service Representative to support a live chat feature for customers who prefer interaction via chat.
- The phone line and chat feature will be live Monday, February 22.

Regulatory Adjustments:

- The Building Official has developed an Alternative Method of Compliance procedure that will make it easier for homeowners to utilize the Homeowner's Permit process.
- Procedures goes into effect on Monday, February 22.

Communications:

- DSD will launch a direct messaging and social media campaign, and will work with and through our partner departments to bolster message distribution.
- Communications will launch Friday, February 19.