

CITY OF BALTIMORE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fewer Hypothermia Deaths in Winter of 2006-2007 in Baltimore

Baltimore, MD (May 14, 2007) – Today, the Baltimore City Health Department released a summary of efforts to prevent deaths from hypothermia in the winter of 2006-2007.

The Baltimore City Winter Shelter, a collaborative effort between the Baltimore City Health Department and the Baltimore City Department of Housing, offers warm meals, overnight shelter, and a range of services to homeless individuals during the coldest winter months. Over the 2006-2007 winter, the Winter Shelter operated daily between November 15 and March 31, and served an average of 229 clients each day.

Additional resources are available through the Baltimore City “Code Blue” plan. On nights predicted to reach temperatures at or below 32° F, the Health Commissioner declares a “Code Blue,” mobilizing outreach teams and initiating free transportation services to and from the Winter Shelter.

Expanded city efforts and milder temperatures contributed to a 50% decrease in the number of Baltimore City hypothermia deaths recorded between September 1 and March 31, as compared to 2005-2006 (from 18 to 9).

“We sincerely thank all of the individuals, agencies, and organizations who participated in this effort,” said Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein, Commissioner of Health. “These partnerships are essential to preventing deaths from exposure to extreme cold.”

For a summary snapshot of Baltimore City Code Blue, go to <http://www.baltimorehealth.org>.

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