

# Cold Weather-Related Illness and Injury in Bennington County, VT

## January 2025

Cold weather poses serious health risks, especially in Bennington County, Vermont, where winters can be harsh. Frostbite, hypothermia and other cold-weather related injuries can affect anyone, but with the right knowledge and preparation they are preventable.

If you need help accessing or understanding this information, contact [AHS.VDHBennington@vermont.gov](mailto:AHS.VDHBennington@vermont.gov)

### When Cold Weather Puts You at Risk



**Below 31°F:** Don't stay outside too long. These temperatures can cause frostbite and hypothermia, especially if you're not dressed warmly.

**Below 13°F:** Avoid going outside if possible. In extreme cold, your body loses heat quickly, and even a short time outside can be dangerous.

### Who Is Most at Risk in Cold Weather?



**Older Adults and Young Children:** Their bodies lose heat quickly, making them more likely to get sick or hurt in the cold.

**People Without Proper Clothing:** Without enough warm layers, like coats, hats, and gloves, frostbite and hypothermia can happen quickly.

**People Without Shelter or Heat:** Those without a warm place to stay or who can't afford heat are at a higher risk of cold-related injuries and illnesses.

### Cold-Related Illness in Bennington County



**Highest Rates in Vermont:** Bennington County has the highest rate of cold-related illnesses in the state, with more cases of frostbite, hypothermia, and other cold-weather injuries than any other county.

**Why it Matters:** Long, harsh winters, limited resources, and financial challenges may contribute to these higher rates, making it especially important to stay informed and prepared.



**HealthVermont.gov**  
802-863-7200

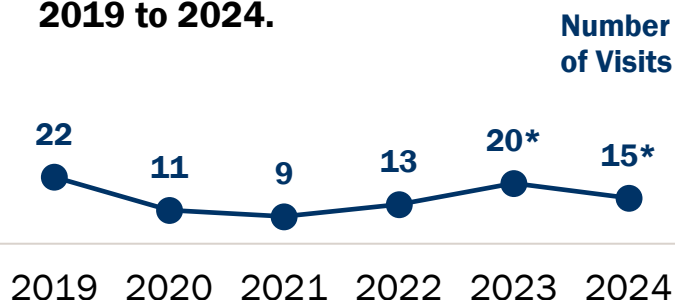


## Cold Weather Impact: Key Data and Charts

### Understanding the Data

- These charts show key information about cold weather illnesses in Bennington County.
- From 2020 to 2023 people who were unhoused received hotel vouchers during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- These vouchers kept more people safe from the cold weather during that time.

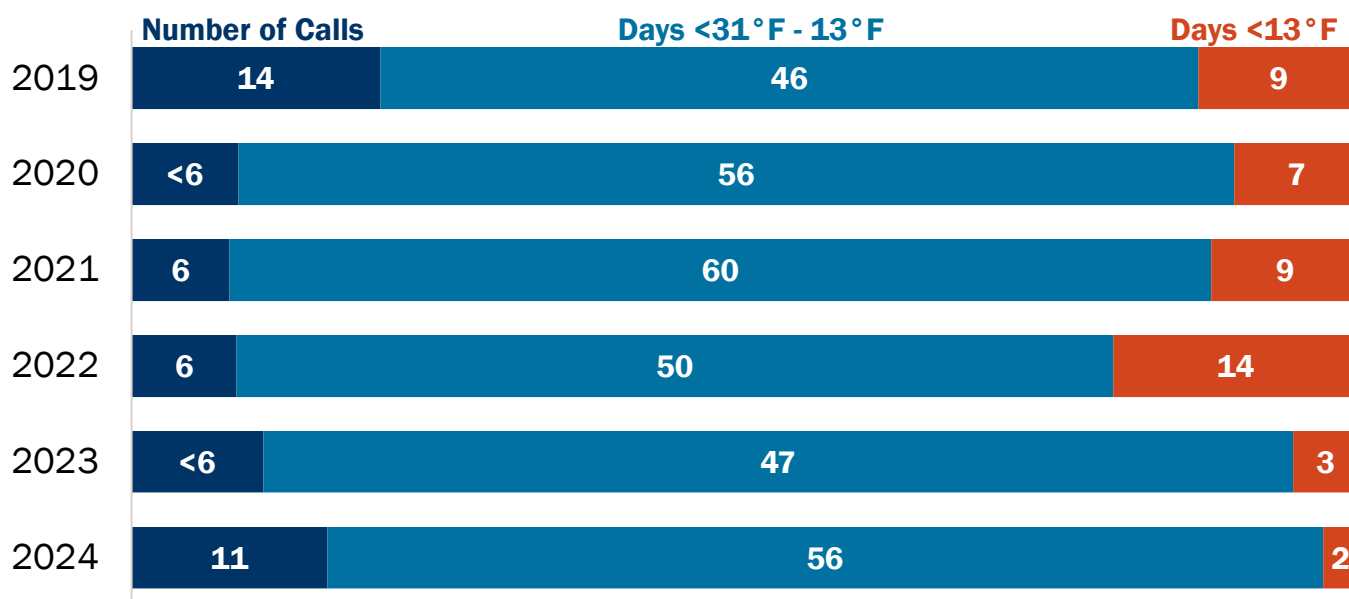
### Number of **emergency room visits** related to cold weather illness 2019 to 2024.



Source: Vermont Uniform Hospital Discharge Data Set, 2019-2022

\*Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-Based Epidemics 2023-2024 (data is preliminary)

### Number of EMS calls for **hypothermia or frostbite** in Bennington County

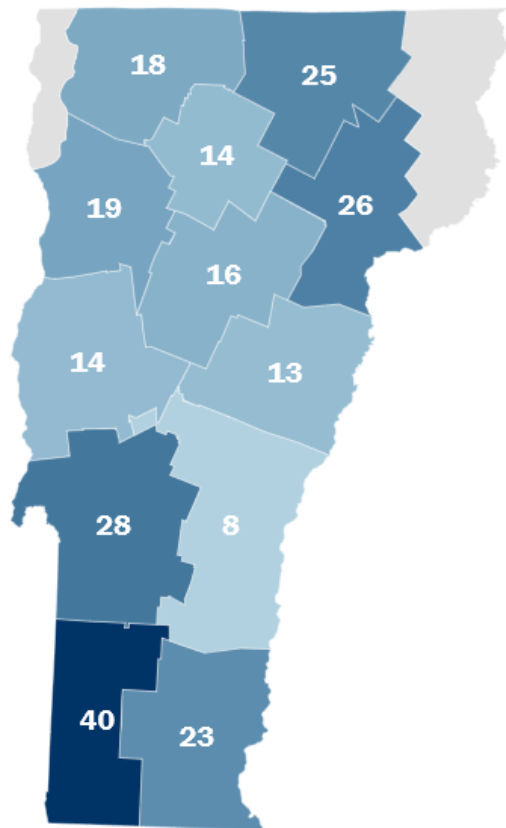


Source: Vermont Statewide Incident Reporting Network (SIREN) 2019-2024.

## Rates of Cold-Related Illness per County

- The map below shows cold-related illnesses rates per 100,000 residents in Vermont counties from 2018 to 2022.
- Bennington County stands out with the highest rate in the state.
- This highlights the need to help people in this area stay safe in cold weather.

**Bennington County had the highest rate of cold-related emergency department visits per 100,000 residents.**  
2018-2022



~Data for Grand Isle and Essex counties are suppressed due to small numbers.  
Source: Vermont Uniform Hospital Discharge Dataset, 2022.