



## **Commissioner Rene Gonzalez immediately suspends city-owned tent and tarp distribution within his bureaus**

Rene Gonzalez, Portland City Commissioner of Public Safety, has announced a temporary suspension of city tent and tarp distribution within the Public Safety Bureaus he manages, including Portland Fire, effective immediately. Distribution of sleeping bags, blankets, and other warming supplies will continue as necessary.

This suspension comes in the wake of a rash of tent-related fires in public spaces, including one this morning under the Morrison Bridge at SE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. No people were injured in today's fire and an investigation is ongoing, but Portland Fire has confirmed that six puppies and a mother dog died on site.

Commissioner Gonzalez elaborated on his decision:

It has become clear that tent and tarp-related fires are a grave public safety emergency for our city. Unsanctioned fires put our first responders, houseless individuals, and our neighborhoods at risk. I am taking immediate action to save lives and protect Portlanders from life-shattering injuries. To Portland's houseless community members: I implore you to seek shelter in public warming centers during cold weather events.

Portland Fire Marshal Kari Schimel added the following statement on this decision:

Portland Fire has been called upon 1,015 times to respond to tent and tarp-related fires over the last two years. On each of these calls our first responders put their lives at risk. Given the heat sources generating these fires and the flammable nature of the materials in question, I have unequivocally advised Commissioner Gonzalez that there is no such thing as a safe, unsanctioned fire in a tent.

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