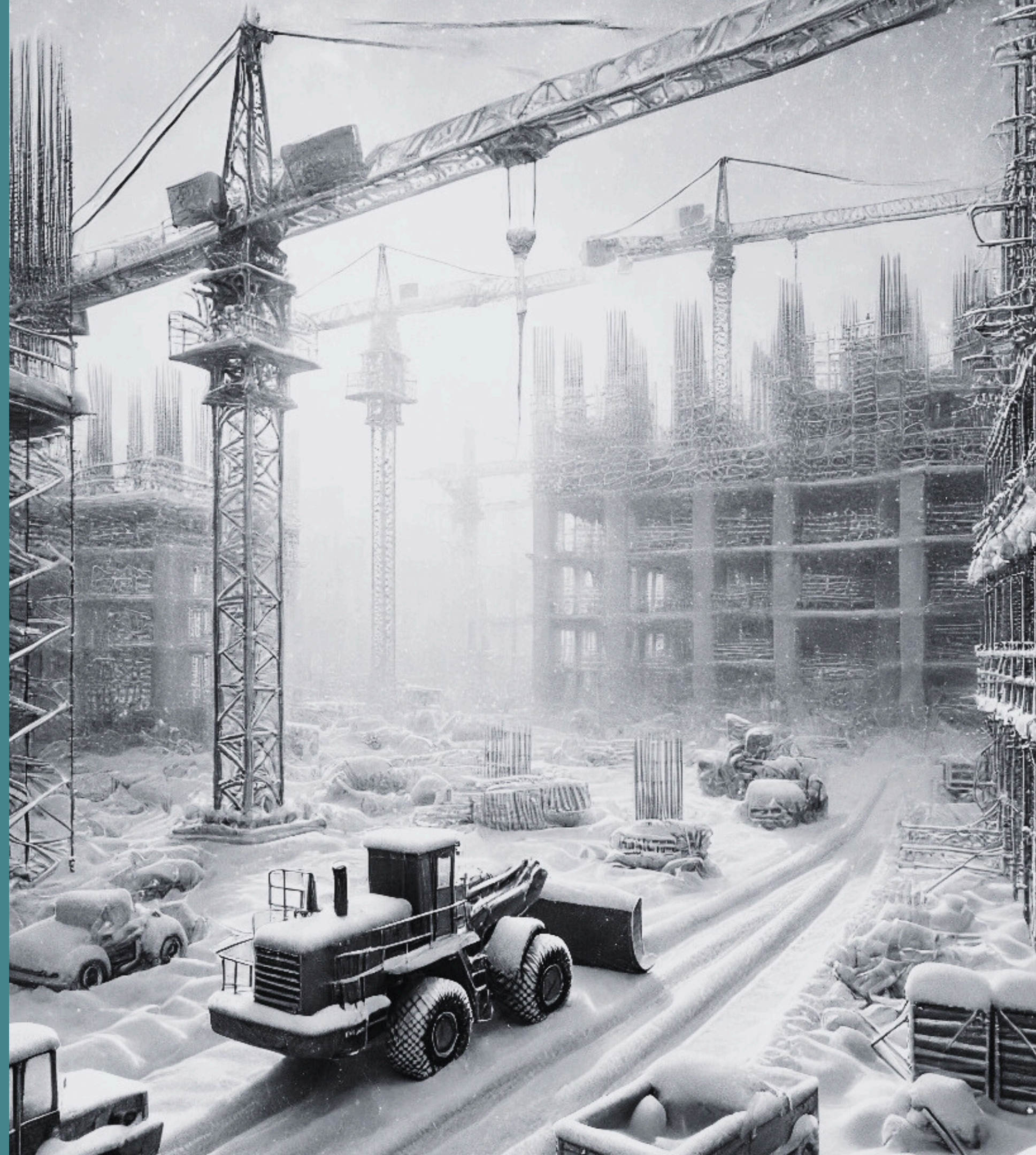


Holiday Mindset Risks in Construction

Leading Through the Season's
Hidden Pressures





The Season of Strain

As the holidays approach, most people outside construction imagine joy, family time, and celebration. But for many in our industry, this season brings a different kind of load — one that's invisible, heavy, and easy to underestimate.

The combination of year-end deadlines, changing weather, financial pressures, and personal expectations can create the *perfect storm* for stress and distraction. For construction leaders, understanding these pressures — and planning for them — is essential to keeping our teams safe, grounded, and connected.

Leadership Stressors: Planning Ahead and Holding the Line

Leaders face their own set of challenges during the holidays. Balancing schedules, job progress, and team morale can stretch even the best foremen and project managers thin.

Some key stressors include:

- Time-off requests and coverage — juggling employee needs with project deadlines.
- Financial impact of downtime — knowing that days off mean unpaid time for many tradespeople.
- Working short-handed — keeping production and safety intact while crews are reduced.
- Preparing jobs for winter — weatherizing, securing materials, and meeting end-of-year commitments.
- The leadership load — carrying the team's emotional weight while trying to stay positive.

For leadership, this season calls for proactive planning, empathy, and adaptability. The more you prepare schedules, communicate early, and stay visible on site, the less these pressures can compound into frustration or burnout.



Workers' Pressures: The Human Side of the Holidays

For trade professionals, the holidays can bring financial and emotional stress that directly impacts mindset and focus:

- Lost income from shutdowns or weather delays.
- Overtime fatigue leading up to shutdowns.
- Distraction. Mental energy split between job tasks and personal responsibilities.
- Limited rest. Working long hours while trying to prepare for family visits or travel.
- Financial pressure. Wanting to provide a great Christmas for the kids, even when cash is tight.
- Loneliness or loss, not everyone has family or community to go home to.
- Cold weather. Long dark mornings, working in the elements, and reduced daylight all add physical strain.

Each of these stressors chips away at mental focus. When workers show up tired, distracted, or emotionally stretched, safety incidents become more likely — not because people stop caring, but because their capacity is overloaded.

Holiday Amplifiers

There are consistent human risk factors behind performance, focus, and safety. The holidays don't create new risks — they amplify existing ones:

- **Overload** – too much on the plate, at work and home.
- **Financial Pressure** – leading to anxiety and distraction.
- **Fatigue** – from overtime and poor recovery.
- **Disconnection** – from family or team, especially during emotional times.
- **Unresolved Stress** – that builds throughout the year and surfaces when routines break.

These amplified stressors erode attention, communication, and teamwork — the foundations of jobsite safety and productivity.



Leadership Strategies for a Safer Holiday Season

1. Plan early and communicate often.

- a. Set clear expectations around time off, coverage, and project priorities well before the holidays.

2. Show empathy and flexibility.

- a. Understand that financial and emotional strain is real even small gestures, like schedule adjustments or early release days, make an impact.
- b. Share company provided resources such as EAP and Health Insurance Benefits plans

3. Model calm and care.

- a. Your tone sets the emotional temperature for the crew. When leaders stay grounded, it helps others do the same.

4. Encourage conversation.

- a. Remind your team that it's okay to talk about stress or ask for help. Create space for human connection, not just production talk.

5. Integrate mental health into safety.

- a. Use daily huddles to check in not just on tools and tasks, but on how people are doing



Closing Thought: Leading With Humanity

Construction runs on people — their skill, grit, and focus.

The holidays test all three.

This season, leadership means more than managing schedules and hitting targets.

It means protecting the human energy that makes everything possible.

The best leaders don't just push their teams through the season — they help them navigate it safely, together.

988 provides crisis support for:

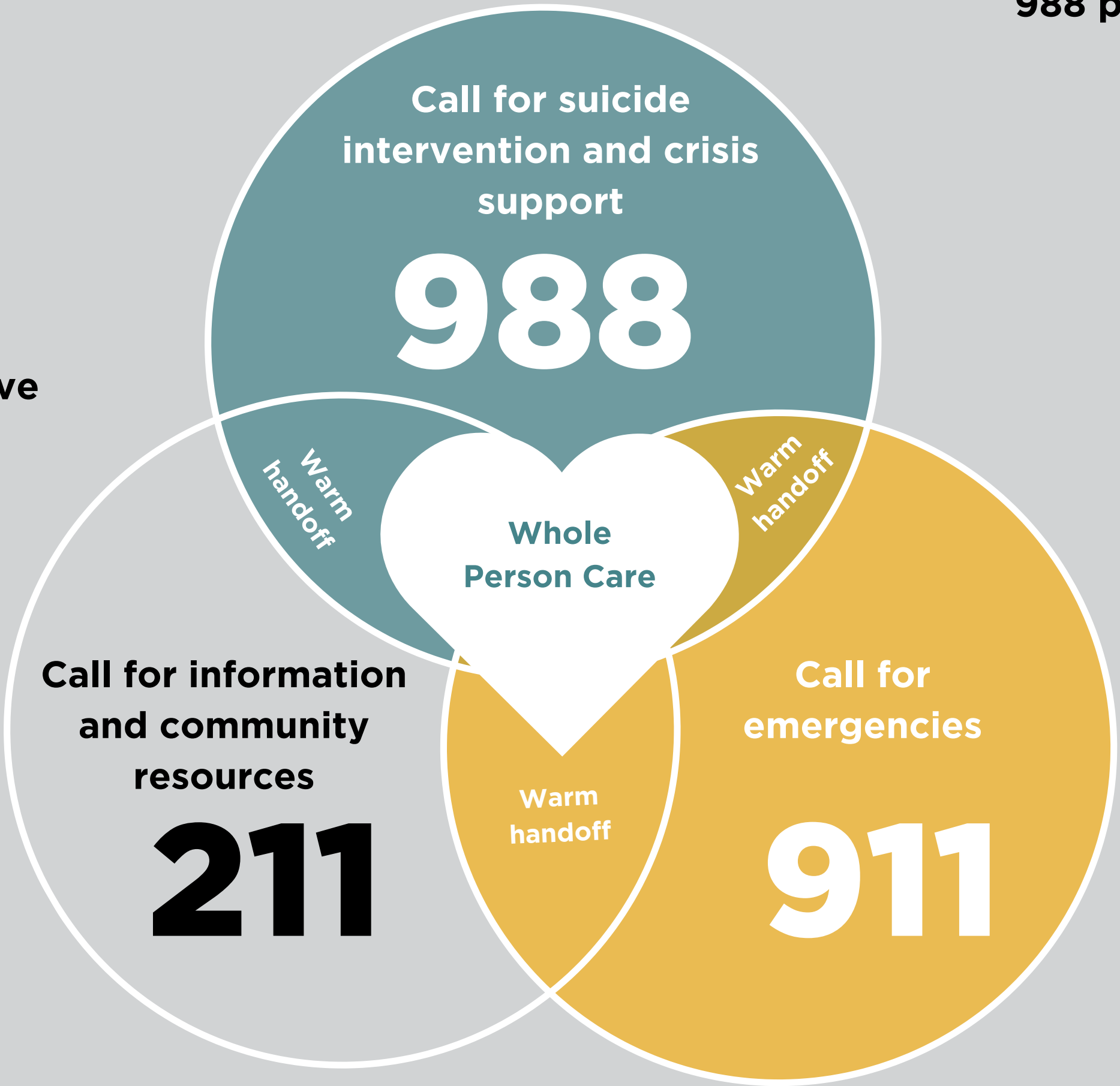
- Thoughts of Suicide
- Mental Health Crisis
- Substance Use Crisis
- Emotional Distress

211 maintains a comprehensive database of community resources and provides information and referrals for essential items like:

- Food
- Housing and Shelter
- Utility Assistance
- Transportation
- Everything Else

911 provides first responder dispatch for:

- Medical Emergency
- Fire
- Reporting a Crime
- Disaster Response
- Life Threatening Situation





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www.preventconstructionsuicide.com

