



Emergency Management Agency
Department of Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ohioans Urged to Take Precautions Against the Heat

COLUMBUS –The Ohio Department of Health and the Ohio Emergency Management Agency urge residents – especially the very young, the chronically ill, and the elderly – to use extra care in avoiding heat-related stress.

On average, 675 deaths from extreme heat events occur each year in the United States. Most vulnerable are the elderly, those who work or exercise outdoors, infants and children, the homeless or poor, and people with a chronic medical condition. People who exercise in extreme heat are more likely to become dehydrated and get heat-related illness. Extremely high or unusually hot temperatures can affect your health.

Almost one year ago, Ohioans were struck with severe weather that left hundreds without power and suffering from the highest temperatures on record. As we begin to see a heat wave move across the country, Ohioans are reminded to take those same precautions to stay healthy and prevent heat-related deaths.

Time to be A Good Neighbor

- Friends and neighbors are urged to periodically check on the elderly and those with illnesses, since they are among those at highest risk for heat-related problems.
- The best defense against heat-related problems is prevention. Staying cool and making simple changes in fluid in-take, activities and clothing during hot weather will help keep you safe and healthy.
- Residents without power can call their local 211 numbers for information and assistance, or 911 in an emergency.
- Use the State of Ohio's [Check on Your Neighbor](#) kit to spread the word

Adults and kids at work and play also need to take measures against heat stress. Summer activity, whether on the playing field, at the construction site, or anywhere else, should be balanced with measures that help the body cool off. Hot weather demands increased fluid intake, regardless of activity level.

Drink Cool Fluids

- Increase your water intake. Don't wait until you are thirsty before you start drinking water.

- Do not take salt tablets without a physician's advice.
- Avoid beverages that contain alcohol or caffeine, because they can add to dehydration and increase the effects of heat illnesses.

Monitor or Limit Outdoor Activities

- Young children may become preoccupied with outdoor play and not realize they are overheated. Adults should mandate frequent breaks and bring children indoors to cool down and have cool drinks.
- Children or adolescents involved in team sports should be closely monitored for signs of heat stress. Consideration should be given to modifying practice or games during the hottest parts of the day and shifting practice to cooler times.

Know How to Treat Heat Exhaustion

- Symptoms of heat exhaustion include: heavy sweating, paleness, muscle cramps, tiredness, weakness, dizziness, headache, nausea or fainting.
- People experiencing these symptoms should be moved to a shady or air-conditioned area. Remove or loosen tight clothing and apply cool, wet clothes or towels.
- Have person sip on a half glass of cool water every 15 minutes. If the person refuses water, vomits or loses consciousness, call 911 or the local emergency number.

Know How to Treat Heat Stroke

- Heat stroke is a life-threatening situation. Call 911 immediately. Symptoms include: a body temperature of 103 degrees or higher, red, hot and dry skin with no sweating, rapid pulse, headache, dizziness, nausea, confusion, unconsciousness, and gray skin color.
- Before medical help arrives, begin cooling the person by any means possible, such as spraying person with water from a garden hose or by placing the person in a cool tub of water.

NEVER Leave Children or Pets in Vehicles

- Even in cool temperatures, cars can heat up to dangerous temperatures quickly. Even if the windows are cracked open, interior temperatures can rise almost 20 degrees within the first 10 minutes.
- Children or animals left inside a vehicle is at risk for serious heat-related illnesses or even death.
- When traveling with children (even routine drives), remember to do the following:
 - To remind yourself that a child is in the car, place bags, phones or other items you will take with you in the back seat. This will force you to turn around before exiting the car.
 - When leaving your vehicle, check the front and back seats to make sure no sleeping children (or pets) are left in the car.

A full [CDC report](#) of how Ohio worked to keep people safe during the 2012 Extreme Heat Event is available online.

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For additional information on how to beat the heat, go to the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness website: www.weathersafety.ohio.gov or the Ohio Department of Health website: www.odh.ohio.gov or the Federal Emergency Management Agency website: www.fema.gov/areyouready/heat.shtm.