



NJ Office of Emergency Management

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START OF SUMMER BRINGS FIRST HIGH TEMPS OF THE SEASON

New Jersey Office of Emergency Management and New Jersey Department of Health Officials Offer Safety Tips

West Trenton, NJ - The New Jersey Office of Emergency Management and the New Jersey Department of Health are monitoring a heat advisory, forecast for Tuesday and Wednesday of this week, in coordination with the National Weather Service. Heat indices are expected to range into the low to mid 90's. Children, older adults, people with disabilities and pets are most at risk during excessive temperatures.

"High temperatures and humid conditions have the possibility of making outdoor activities and non air-conditioned facilities extremely dangerous and uncomfortable," said Colonel Rick Fuentes, State Police Superintendent and Director of the NJ Office of Emergency Management. "This will be the first time this year the temperatures are expected to rise above 90 degrees. Be mindful of the threats that heat waves pose such as heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat stroke and sometimes death. These threats can be minimized and eliminated if we practice heat-related precautions and guidelines."

"Be sure to check on your family, friends and neighbors during hot weather paying special attention to children and the elderly as they are most susceptible to heat stroke or heat exhaustion," said NJ Department of Health Commissioner Mary E. O'Dowd.

"Signs that a person could be impacted include: hot dry skin, rapid strong pulse, an absence of sweat, cramps, headache or confusion."

Colonel Fuentes and Commissioner O'Dowd suggest the following heat related emergency safety tips:

- Stay indoors in air conditioning as much as possible
- If you do go outside stay in the shade
- If your home is not air conditioned, spend at least two hours daily at an air conditioned mall, library or other public place
- Wear sunscreen outside, along with loose fitting light colored clothes that cover as much skin as possible
- Drink water regularly even if you are not thirsty. Limit alcohol, and sugary drinks which speeds dehydration
- Never leave children or pets alone in the car
- Avoid exertion during the hottest part of the day
- Take a cool shower or bath
- Be a good neighbor, check on elderly and people with disabilities in your community who may need assistance keeping cool

Additionally, residents should contact their local and/or County Offices of Emergency Management regarding any open air-conditioned senior centers or cooling stations, or call 2-1-1.

According to the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention, older adults and people with disabilities are more at risk for heat because they do not adjust as well as young people to sudden changes in temperature; they are more likely to have a chronic medical condition that changes normal body responses to heat; and they are more likely to take prescription medicines that impair the body's ability to regulate its temperature or that inhibit perspiration.

The CDC also offers the following tips for older adults, persons with disabilities and/or their caregivers:

- Visit older adults who are at risk at least twice a day and watch them for signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke.
- Encourage them to increase their fluid intake by drinking cool, nonalcoholic beverages regardless of their activity level.

Warning: If their doctor generally limits the amount of fluid they drink or they are on water pills, they will need to ask their doctor how much they should drink while the weather is hot.

- Take them to air-conditioned locations, if they have transportation problems.

Heat is often referred to as the "silent killer," in contrast to tornados, hurricanes and other natural hazards with more dramatic visual effects. For more information regarding heat related emergencies, please log on to ready.nj.gov, visit the National Weather Service Heat Safety Page (<http://www.weather.gov/om/heat/index.shtml>), or log on to NJ 2-1-1 (www.nj211.org). Air quality can be monitored at www.airnow.gov.

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