



NJ Office of Emergency Management

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Pre-Holiday Time Period Brings Excessive Heat Warning

NJOEM and New Jersey Department of Health Offer Safety Tips – Enjoy Outdoor Events Safely

WEST TRENTON N.J. – The New Jersey Office of Emergency Management is monitoring excessive heat watches and warning forecast for today and into early next week, in coordination with the National Weather Service. Temperatures and heat indexes are estimated to hit in the upper 90's, and possibly even reach 100 degrees or higher. Children, older adults, people with disabilities and pets are most at risk during excessive temperatures.

Many New Jersey residents will be taking part in outdoor activities in anticipation of the upcoming July Fourth holiday. Anyone spending time outdoors should remember to hydrate, wear sunscreen, spend some time in the shade, and take frequent breaks if walking around for long periods of time.

"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 Office of Emergency Management. "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."

"While the very young and the elderly are at greater risk of heat exhaustion, heatstroke or other heat-related illnesses, it is important for everyone to take precautions this summer," said Commissioner O'Dowd. "When the weather turns extremely hot and humid, it's vital to drink plenty of fluids, spend time in cool places and reduce any physical activity. And please remember to check on elderly family members and neighbors to make sure they are safe."

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.

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 www.ready.nj.gov, visit the National Weather Service Heat Safety Page (<http://www.weather.gov/om/heat/index.shtml>), the U.S. Center for Disease Control Extreme Heat Page (http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/heat_guide.asp) or call 2-1-1.

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