



David L. Maack, CEM, CPM, WCEM

Office of Emergency Management
730 Wisconsin Ave
Racine, WI 53403

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: July 19, 2016

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

David L. Maack, CEM, CPM, WCEM
Racine County Emergency Management

Racine County Emergency Management Offers Tips To Beat The Heat

The National Weather Service (NWS) in Milwaukee/Sullivan has issued an Excessive Heat Watch from Thursday afternoon through Friday evening. A hot and humid air mass is expected to build into the region for the end of the work week.

Daytime high temperatures will reach the mid-90s both Thursday and Friday. When combined with dew points in the mid 70's, heat index values will top out between 105 and 107. Overnight lows will only cool into the middle 70s.

An excessive heat watch means that a prolonged period of hot temperatures is expected. The combination of hot temperatures and high humidity will combine to create a dangerous situation in which heat illnesses are possible.

Those most at risk of heat related illnesses are small children, the elderly and those with chronic medical conditions. "Check in on family, friends and neighbors, especially those who may be at risk," urged David Maack, Racine County Emergency Management Coordinator.

Racine County Emergency Management is recommending that people take the following precautions to "Beat the Heat":

- 1. Never leave children, disabled persons, or pets in a parked car – even briefly.** Temperatures in a car can become life threatening within minutes. On an 80-degree day with sunshine, the temperature inside a car even with the windows cracked slightly can rise 20 to 30 degrees above the outside temperature in 10 to 20 minutes. There have been cases where the inside temperature rose 40 degrees!
- 2. Keep your living space cool.** Cover windows to keep the sun from shining in. If you don't have an air conditioner, open windows to let air circulate. When it's hotter than 95 degrees use fans to blow hot air out of the window rather than to blow hot air on your body. Basements or ground floors are often cooler than upper floors.

3. **Slow down and limit physical activity.** Plan outings or exertion for the early morning or after dark when temperatures are cooler.
4. **Drink plenty of water and eat lightly.** Don't wait for thirst, but instead drink plenty of water throughout the day. Avoid alcohol or caffeine and stay away from hot, heavy meals.
5. **Wear lightweight, loose-fitting, light-colored clothing.** Add a hat or umbrella to keep your head cool...and don't forget sunscreen!
6. **Don't stop taking medication unless your doctor says you should.** Take extra care to stay cool and ask your doctor or pharmacist for any special heat advice.
7. **Taking a cool shower or bath will cool you down.** A shower or bath will actually work faster than an air conditioner. Applying cold wet rags to the neck, head and limbs also cools down the body quickly.

Finally, don't forget about pets during periods of excessive heat. "Dogs and cats don't perspire, they pant, and panting isn't very effective in extreme hot weather," commented Maack.

If you have pets, please take the following precautions:

- Never leave an animal in a parked vehicle, even for a few minutes. The temperature in a parked car may hit 120 degrees within minutes, so just a 10-minute stop may be dangerous. Opening the windows a few inches doesn't provide enough cooling. If you're running errands, leave your dog home -- in a cool basement, or in a shaded yard with a wading pool. If you're traveling, make your pit stops at places where your pet can get out of the vehicle.
- Provide fresh, cool drinking water at all times -- including in your vehicle when you're traveling.
- Outdoor kennels must be well-ventilated and shaded, with water in bowls that will not tip.
- Don't exercise pets on hot days or warm, humid nights.
- Groom your pet. Clip long coats to about an inch -- shorter clips or shaving can leave dogs vulnerable to sunburn. Brush cats daily in hot weather, when they shed profusely, to help keep them comfortable by preventing hairballs. Good grooming can prevent summer skin problems, too.

-end-