



# MEDIA RELEASE

## Emergency Management Agency

Ohio Emergency Management Agency • Nancy J. Dragani, Executive Director  
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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### STATE OFFICIALS URGE RESIDENTS TO USE CAUTION DURING EXTREME HEAT

COLUMBUS, OH – With heat and humidity on the rise, the Ohio Department of Health and Ohio Emergency Management Agency urge residents to use extra care to avoid heat-related illness over the next several days.

Even short periods of high temperatures can cause serious health problems. During hot weather health emergencies, keep informed by listening to local weather and news channels or contact local health departments for health and safety updates. Doing too much on a hot day, spending too much time in the sun or staying too long in an overheated place can cause heat-related illnesses

“When temperatures are extremely hot and there is high humidity, the body has to work extra hard to try to maintain a normal temperature,” said ODH Director Ted Wymyslo, M.D. “We start to see heat-related illnesses such as heat stroke and heat exhaustion when the body is overwhelmed. It’s important to pay attention to warning, in 2010 there were nine related deaths in Ohio.

According to FEMA, most heat disorders occur because a person has been over-exposed to heat or has over-exercised for his/her age and physical condition. People most at risk for heat injuries are infants and young children; people age 65 and older; overweight people; people who over-exert during work or exercise; and people who are ill or on certain medications.

“Summer is the ideal season for increased outdoor activity and fun in the sun,” said Nancy Dragani, Ohio EMA executive director. “But summer is also the time where people have increased injuries and accidents. If you have neighbors who are elderly or have special medical needs, check on them to ensure they’re cool enough and have enough water to drink.”

To help avoid heat injuries and illness, people should plan outdoor activities for either early morning or late evening, when the sun is less direct. Wear loose-fitting, light-colored clothing and a wide-brimmed hat to protect against sunburn. Move to the shade or into an air conditioned building at the first signs of becoming overheated. Heat-related symptoms can come on quickly.

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Use the following tips from ODH and Ohio EMA to help beat the heat:

### **Drink Cool (not icy cold) Fluids**

- Active people should drink 2-4 glasses (16-32 ounces) of cool, non-alcoholic fluids every hour. Drinking water is best.
- 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.

### **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.

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

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