



Alert Chicago **Guide to Extreme Heat Preparedness**

During the summer months, temperatures in Chicago can reach dangerous levels. Besides discomfort, extremely high temperatures especially when combined with high humidity can pose serious harm to your personal health and can be particularly hazardous for children, the elderly, and those with special needs and pets. In addition, the extreme heat can leave homes and businesses susceptible to prolonged power outages as electrical grids become overwhelmed by increased demand.

It is important to treat extreme heat temperatures as you would any other emergency. This means being personally prepared whether you are at home or on the go.

Know What's "Hot"

Heat Watch:

The National Weather Service will issue a Heat Watch if any of the following conditions are forecast to occur in the next day or two but there is still some uncertainty:

- ✓ 3 consecutive days with the Heat Index at 100-105 degrees.
- ✓ 2 consecutive days with the Heat Index at 105-110 degrees.
- ✓ A single day with the Heat Index at 110 degrees or higher.

Heat Warning:

The National Weather Service will issue a Heat Warning when Heat Index ranges listed above are occurring, imminent, or highly likely to occur.

Heat Index: The heat index combines air temperature and humidity to determine an apparent temperature.

Extreme Weather Notification System:

To be advised by the city when extreme heat or extreme cold temperatures are expected, visit alertchicago.org or call 311 to sign up yourself, a friend or a neighbor for the Extreme Weather Notification System. Registered members will receive a recorded phone message informing them of official warnings and available city services.

Staying Healthy in the Heat

People suffer from heat-related illnesses when their bodies are unable to properly cool. Under normal conditions, the body produces sweat that evaporates and cools the body. In abnormal heat and high humidity, however, evaporation is slowed and the body must work extra hard to maintain its normal temperature. Here are some common sense tips for handling the heat, brought to you by the Chicago Department of Public Health and the the U.S. Centers for Disease Control:

- ✓ Drink eight 8 ounce glasses of water a day. Avoid alcoholic beverages, coffee and colas.
- ✓ Stay indoors and, when possible, stay in an air-conditioned place.



- ✓ Take cool baths or showers; use cool towels.
- ✓ Wear loose, light cotton clothing.
- ✓ Avoid preparing and eating heavy meals and using cooking ovens.
- ✓ Avoid or minimize physical exertion.
- ✓ Do not let anyone sit in a hot, parked car, even for a few minutes.
- ✓ It is against the law to open a fire hydrant. An open hydrant hinders the Fire Department's ability to fight fires, reduces water pressure in your home and may cause basement flooding. An open hydrant is very dangerous place for children to play, because the water can reduce visibility and create a traffic hazard.

If you must be out in the heat:

- ✓ Limit your outdoor activity to morning and evening hours
- ✓ Cut down on exercise. If you must exercise, drink two to four glasses of cool, nonalcoholic fluids each hour.
- ✓ Try to rest often in shady areas
- ✓ Protect yourself from the sun by wearing a wide brimmed hat and sunglasses and by putting on sunscreen.

Heat Injuries and Treatment

Type of Injury	Symptoms	Treatment
<p>Heat Cramps Heat cramps usually affect people who sweat a lot during strenuous activity. This sweating depletes the body's salt and moisture. The low salt level in the muscles may be the cause of heat cramps.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Muscle pains or spasms ▪ Usually in the abdomen, arms, legs ▪ Occur in association with strenuous activity. ▪ Nausea and/or fatigue. 	<p>If you have heart problems or are on a low-sodium diet, you should seek medical attention. Other wise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stop all activity, and sit in a cool place. ▪ Drink clear juice or a sports beverage ▪ Avoid strenuous activity for a few hours after the cramps subside. ▪ Seek medical attention if cramps do not subside after 1 hour.
<p>Heat Exhaustion Can develop after several days of exposure to high temperatures and inadequate or unbalanced replacement of fluids. Those most prone to heat exhaustion are elderly people, people with high blood pressure, and people working or exercising in a hot environment. If heat exhaustion is untreated, it may progress to heat stroke.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Heavy sweating ▪ Paleness ▪ Muscle cramps ▪ Tiredness ▪ Weakness ▪ Dizziness ▪ Headache ▪ Nausea or vomiting ▪ Fainting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drink cool, nonalcoholic beverages ▪ Rest in an air-conditioned environment, if possible ▪ Cool shower, bath, or sponge bath ▪ Wear lightweight clothing
<p>Heat Stroke (Sun Stroke) Heat stroke occurs when the body is unable to regulate its</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A body temperature above 103° F, orally. ▪ Red, hot, and dry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Call for immediate medical assistance immediately. ▪ Lay victim in a shady area

<p>temperature. The body's temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails, and the body is unable to cool down. Body temperature may rise to 106°F or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not provided.</p>	<p>skin (no sweating)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rapid, strong pulse ▪ Throbbing headache ▪ Dizziness ▪ Nausea ▪ Confusion ▪ Unconsciousness ▪ Uncontrollable muscle twitching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cool the victim rapidly using whatever methods you can. (E.g., immerse the victim in a tub of cool water, place the person in a cool shower; spray the victim with cool water from a garden hose; sponge the person with cool water.) ▪ Monitor body temperature, and continue cooling efforts until the body temperature drops to 101-102° F. ▪ Do not give the victim fluids. Most people with heatstroke have an altered mental status and cannot safely be given fluids to drink.
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Every Chicagoan should check on relatives, friends and neighbors during extremely hot weather to ensure their safety, particularly the elderly or those who have a serious medical condition. Additionally, anyone at risk can register with 311 to request for heat related assistance such as:

- ✓ A well being check
- ✓ Locate the nearest cooling center
- ✓ Sign-up for the Extreme Weather Notification System.

Cooling Alternatives

One of the best ways to beat the heat is to stay indoors in an air-conditioned place. If you or others you know have limited access to air-conditioning, you may consider taking refuge in area shopping malls or public facilities. The Chicago Department of Human Services works with other city departments to make sure public buildings such as libraries, park facilities, and Department on Aging senior regional centers available as Cooling Centers.

While these centers are meant for short-term, daytime use, many are prepared to expand hours in the event of a heat emergency. A listing of CDHS operated cooling centers is below. To find the nearest library, park field house or pool, or senior regional center, contact 3-1-1.

North Area Center
4740 North Sheridan Road

Garfield Center
10 S. Kedzie Avenue

Englewood Center
845 W. 69th St.

Trina Davila Center
4345-47 West Armitage Avenue

King Center
4314 South Cottage Grove Avenue

South Chicago Center
8759 S. Commercial Ave.

Note: All CDHS operated cooling centers are ADA accessible



Don't Forget Your Pets

Any animal can suffer from the heat, particularly very young or very old animals, short nosed breeds of dogs (e.g. pugs, bulldogs), heavy coated cats and dogs, and pets who are overweight or have a medical condition.

- ✓ Provide water and shelter from the sun at all times.
- ✓ Restrict activity during extreme heat.
- ✓ *Never* leave pets in parked vehicles. Even moderate heat rapidly increases and can kill the pet quickly.

Keeping Your Home Cool

- ✓ Inspect/Install additional insulation. Inspect the insulation between heated and unheated areas (eg garage, attic, crawl space, etc)to ensure insulation is at least 6 inches thick. Insulation helps to keep heat out in the summer as well as to keep heat in during the winter months.
- ✓ Use ceiling fans. Because heat rises, ceiling fans can help clear the hottest air from the home. Be sure that the fan blades are rotating clockwise.
- ✓ Landscape. Plant trees or shrubs to shade air conditioning units, but do not block the airflow or plan near powerlines. A unit operating in the shade uses less electricity. Additionally, according to the Department of Energy, just three trees, properly placed around a house, can save between \$100 and \$250 annually in cooling and heating costs. Daytime air temperatures can be 3 to 6 degrees cooler in tree-shaded neighborhoods.
- ✓ Keep electric lights off or turned down.
- ✓ Keep shades drawn and blinds closed, but windows slightly open.

Power Outages

Power outages can severely impact the welfare and public safety of Chicagoans. While the City often experiences outages of limited durations throughout the year, a large-scale power outage is most likely to occur during summer months, when temperatures are at an extreme and electricity is in great demand.

Power outages are commonly caused by:

- ✓ Equipment failure or maintenance
- ✓ Weather-related damage such as lightning or high winds
- ✓ Wildlife, usually squirrels, chewing into power cables
- ✓ Fallen tree branches (ComEd trims trees adjacent to power lines every four years.)

If an outage occurs:

- ✓ Turn off all appliances including your furnace, water heater, and water pump.
(This is to help you avoid a circuit overload once power is restored)
- ✓ Leave on one lamp to know when power has been restored

Heat Emergency Brochure 2012

- ✓ Report power outages by calling **ComEd** at **1-800-EDISON-1** (1-800-334-7661).
Note: When calling to report a power outage, a ticket for service is generated and crews are dispatched to restore power based on calls received.
- ✓ Keep freezer and refrigerator doors closed and open them only when necessary.
Food will stay frozen for 36 to 48 hours in a fully loaded freezer, if you keep the door closed. A half full freezer will generally keep food frozen for 24 hours.
- ✓ If you rely on electric medical equipment, such as wheelchairs, ventilators and oxygen compressors, plan ahead by talking to your medical supply company about getting batteries or a generator as a backup power source.

For prolonged outages be sure to an emergency supply kit that contains:

- ✓ Flashlight
- ✓ Battery powered AM/FM radio
- ✓ Fresh extra batteries
- ✓ One gallon of water per person per day for up to 3days.
- ✓ Non-perishable foods (peanut butter, canned goods, dehydrated fruit, etc)
- ✓ Can opener
- ✓ Place items in a back pack, which will allow you to carry them if necessary while keeping your hands free.