



For Immediate Release

June 27, 2012

How to Stay Safe, Cool, and Avoid Heat-Related Illnesses

Winnebago County – June 27, 2012. Several local agencies remind Winnebago County residents to take preventive action during this extremely hot weather to stay safe, cool, and avoid heat-related illnesses.

The National Weather Service reports a heat wave is expected for northern Illinois and northwest Indiana over the next several days. High temperatures will be 100 to 105 Thursday, with temperatures in the 90's forecast through the weekend.

Winnebago County agencies offer services and information to help ensure the health and safety of our residents. Additionally, the Rockford Human Services Department has a help line for residents in Winnebago and Boone County to call for local heat related information. That number is **815-987-5711**. This help line is open from **8 am to 5 pm on weekdays**.

Extremely high or unusually hot temperatures can affect your health. On average, 675 deaths from extreme heat events occur each year in the United States. Again, the most vulnerable are the elderly, those who work or exercise outdoors, infants and children, the homeless or poor, and people with a chronic medical condition.

Take the necessary precautions to prevent serious health effects such as heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

Stay cool

- Stay in air-conditioned buildings.
- Do not rely on a fan as your primary cooling device.
- Limit outdoor activity, especially midday when it is the hottest part of the day, and avoid direct sunlight.
- Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.

- Take cool showers or baths to lower your body temperature.
- Check on at-risk friends, family and neighbors at least twice a day.

Stay hydrated

- Drink more than usual and don't wait until you're thirsty to drink
- Drink from two to four cups of water every hour while working or exercising outside.
- Avoid alcohol or liquids containing high amounts of sugar.
- Make sure your family, friends and neighbors are drinking enough water.

Stay informed

- Check your local news for extreme heat warnings and safety tips.
- Keep your friends, family and neighbors aware of weather and heat safety information.
- To help keep the public informed about heat-related health information, the Winnebago County Health Department's website, www.wchd.org, will have heat-related information throughout this heat emergency.

The local hospitals recommend that if residents are experiencing a heat related illness to first call their family physician or go to an immediate care clinic for treatment. **If it is a medical emergency, please call 911 for assistance.**

For additional information on Wednesday, June 27th or Thursday, June 28th contact Public Information Officer, Sue Fuller at 815-720-4213 or sfuller@wchd.org.

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