

NORHTERN ILLINOIS RESIDENTS REMINDED TO PROTECT AGAINST HEAT DURING WEEK END EVENTS



Rockford, IL – July 21, 2011 - The Rockford Regional Heat Emergency Response Team would like to remind the residents of Northern Illinois to continue preventive action during this extremely hot weather to stay safe, cool, and avoid heat-related illnesses.

“Area citizens have responded well to our message that they remain inside, stay cool, and stay hydrated,” Kurt Ditzler of the Winnebago County Sheriff’s office pointed out. “However we are heading into a busy week end and people may be out at events or sporting activities. We would like to remind them to remain diligent about the heat throughout the week end.”

Temperatures are expected to drop to the low 90’s for Friday and Saturday, but the lower temperature may be accompanied by storms, which could cause the heat index to remain uncomfortably high.

Particularly vulnerable are the young athletes that may be out in the heat for extended periods of time this week end.

Follow these tips to help children and teens prepare for practice or games in extreme heat:

- Wear light colored, breathable clothing made of natural fibers like cotton.
- Bring a spray bottle and periodically mist the skin; or apply cool, wet cloths.
- Take frequent breaks between drills.
- Eat a light, healthy meal a few hours before practice.
- Avoid the sun and work out in shaded areas whenever possible.
- Avoid sports drinks that contain caffeine, which can act as a diuretic. (Water is the best form of hydration.)
- Inform a coach if your child has had prior heat-related illness.
- Don't rely exclusively on thermometer to assess heat risk. Humidity is a major factor in how the body perceives exertion.
- Apply, and reapply, sunscreen.

Be on the lookout for symptoms of heat stroke or other weather-related issues. Begin hydration immediately for a child who has stopped sweating (a serious symptom), has hot, dry, red skin, or who reports they feel lightheaded or dizzy. Other symptoms include nausea or vomiting, and skin that is pale and moist. In addition to water, stop the activity and seek immediate medical attention for any young athlete who exhibits these symptoms.

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Residents without a means of staying cool are encouraged to visit a cooling site. “The sites are well-distributed throughout Winnebago and Boone County,” Jennifer Jaeger of the City of Rockford Human Services stated. **“We will offer assistance when needed and encourage residents to call the Rockford Human Services Department help line at is 815-987-5711. This help line will be open 24 hours a day until this heat spell ends.”**

Where to Cool Off

Harlem Township
819 Melbourne Ave
Machesney Park
815-633-9382
8:00 to 4:00

Monday thru Thursday
Let them know the FD sent them
Chairs and a TV

Machesney Park Village Hall
300 Machesney Park Rd.
815-877-5432
8:00 to 4:00
Monday thru Friday

Carpenter’s Place
1149 Railroad Ave.
Rockford
8:30 to 3:00
815-964-4105

Salvation Army/ Rockford
1706 18th Ave.
9:00 to 4:00
815-397-0440

Jubilee Center
Park Ave. & N. Court St.
Rockford
9:00 to 12:00 and 1:00 to 3:00
815-964-5520

Salvation Army /Belvidere
422 S. Main St.
Monday – Friday
9:00 to 4:00
815-544-3892

Winnebago County Criminal Justice Center
650 W. State St.
Rockford
Lobby open 24 / 7

Public Safety Building
420 W. State St.
Rockford
8:00 to 4:00

Keen Age Center
2141 Henry Luckow Lane
Belvidere
8:00 to 4:30
815-544-9893

Rockford Rescue Mission
815-965-5332

Men’s Crisis Center
715 W. State St.
Rockton Ave. Entrance
815-316-4148

Woman’s Crisis Center
809 Cedar St.
Rockford
8:00 – 5:00
7 days
815-986-0393

Cherry Valley Village Hall
806 E. State Street
Cherry Valley, IL 61016
Monday – Friday; 8AM to 5 PM

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Frequently Asked Questions regarding Extreme Heat. (CDC)

What happens to the body as a result of exposure to extreme heat?

People suffer heat-related illness when the body's temperature control system is overloaded. The body normally cools itself by sweating. But under some conditions, sweating just isn't enough. In such cases, a person's body temperature rises rapidly.

Who is at greatest risk for heat-related illness?

Those at greatest risk for heat-related illness include infants and children up to four years of age, people 65 years of age and older, people who are overweight, and people who are ill or on certain medications, including drugs that inhibit perspiration or affect fluid balance in the body.

What is heat stroke?

Heat stroke is the most serious heat-related illness. It occurs when the body becomes unable to control its temperature. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not provided. Warning signs of a heat stroke include: An extremely high body temperature (above 103°F); red, hot, and dry skin (no sweating); rapid, strong pulse; throbbing headache; dizziness; nausea; confusion; unconsciousness. If you see any of these signs, you may be dealing with a life-threatening emergency. Have someone call for immediate medical assistance while you begin cooling the victim.

What is heat exhaustion?

Heat exhaustion is a milder form of heat-related illness that can develop after several days of exposure to high temperatures and inadequate or unbalanced replacement of fluids. The warning signs of heat exhaustion include the following: heavy sweating; paleness; muscle cramps; tiredness; weakness; dizziness; headache; nausea or vomiting; fainting. The skin may be cool and moist. The pulse rate will be fast and weak, and breathing will be fast and shallow. If heat exhaustion is untreated, it may progress to heat stroke. See medical attention if symptoms worsen or last longer than one hour.

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.**

To help keep the public updated about heat-related information, the Winnebago County Health Department's website, www.wchd.org, will have current heat-related information on a daily basis throughout this heat spell.

For additional information, please contact Public Information Officer: Julia Scott Valdez at: Julia.valdez@rockfordil.gov or 815-378-0291

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