

READY TOGETHER FOUNDATION
COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS RESOURCE LIBRARY

RTF-109

Extreme Heat Safety Guide

A Practical Guide to Protecting Your Family During Heatwaves and
High Temperatures

Building Resilient Communities Together

Extreme Heat Can Be Dangerous

Extreme heat can affect anyone, but it poses a greater risk to older adults, young children, people with chronic medical conditions, outdoor workers, and pets.

Heat-related illnesses can develop quickly, especially during prolonged periods of high temperatures.

Preparing before a heatwave can help protect your family and reduce the risk of serious illness.

Stay informed. Stay hydrated. Stay cool.

Why Heat Safety Matters

Preparing for extreme heat helps your family:

- Prevent heat-related illnesses.
- Stay hydrated.
- Protect vulnerable family members.
- Reduce the risk of dehydration and heat exhaustion.
- Stay safe during prolonged power outages or heat emergencies.

Preparation saves lives.

Before a Heatwave

Take these steps before temperatures rise.

- ☐ Monitor local weather forecasts.
- ☐ Identify nearby cooling centers.
- ☐ Check that fans and air conditioners are working properly.
- ☐ Stock bottled water and electrolyte drinks.
- ☐ Keep light-colored, lightweight clothing available.
- ☐ Prepare an emergency kit in case of power outages.
- ☐ Make a plan to check on family members and neighbors who may need assistance.

Preparation begins before the first hot day.

Staying Safe During Extreme Heat

Protect yourself by:

- ☐ Drinking plenty of water throughout the day.
- ☐ Avoiding sugary or alcoholic beverages if they contribute to dehydration.
- ☐ Wearing lightweight, loose-fitting clothing.
- ☐ Staying indoors during the hottest part of the day whenever possible.
- ☐ Taking cool showers or baths if needed.
- ☐ Using fans and air conditioning safely.

- ☐ Resting frequently if working outdoors.

Never wait until you feel thirsty to drink water.

Recognize Heat-Related Illness

Heat Exhaustion

Watch for:

- ☐ Heavy sweating.
- ☐ Weakness or fatigue.
- ☐ Dizziness.
- ☐ Nausea.
- ☐ Headache.
- ☐ Cool, pale skin.

Move to a cool place, drink water, and seek medical advice if symptoms worsen.

Heat Stroke

Warning signs include:

- ☐ High body temperature.
- ☐ Hot, red skin.
- ☐ Confusion.
- ☐ Loss of consciousness.
- ☐ Seizures.

Heat stroke is a medical emergency.

Call 911 immediately.

Protecting Children

Children are especially vulnerable to heat.

- ☐ Encourage frequent water breaks.
- ☐ Dress children in lightweight clothing.
- ☐ Limit outdoor play during peak heat.
- ☐ Never leave a child in a parked vehicle.

Even a few minutes inside a hot vehicle can be life-threatening.

Protecting Older Adults

Older adults may not notice dehydration as quickly.

Check on them regularly.

Ensure they have:

- ☐ Drinking water.
- ☐ Air conditioning or fans.
- ☐ Medications.
- ☐ Emergency contact information.
- ☐ Transportation if cooling centers become necessary.

Protecting Pets

Pets also suffer during extreme heat.

- ☐ Provide plenty of fresh water.
- ☐ Ensure access to shade.
- ☐ Avoid walking pets on hot pavement.
- ☐ Never leave pets in parked vehicles.
- ☐ Watch for signs of heat stress.

If in doubt, contact your veterinarian.

Outdoor Activities

If you must work or exercise outdoors:

- ☐ Schedule activities during cooler hours.
- ☐ Take frequent breaks.
- ☐ Wear sunscreen.
- ☐ Wear a hat.
- ☐ Drink water often.
- ☐ Work with a partner whenever possible.

Listen to your body.

During a Power Outage

If extreme heat occurs during a power outage:

- ☐ Move to a designated cooling center if necessary.
- ☐ Stay hydrated.
- ☐ Keep blinds or curtains closed during the day.
- ☐ Use battery-powered fans if available.
- ☐ Follow official emergency updates.

Ready Together Action

Complete these three steps this week:

- ☐ Locate your nearest cooling center.
- ☐ Prepare extra drinking water for your household.
- ☐ Check on one older adult, neighbor, or friend during the next hot day.

Prepared communities care for one another.

Review Your Heat Safety Plan

Review your preparedness:

- ☐ Before every summer.
- ☐ Before expected heatwaves.
- ☐ After changes in household members.
- ☐ Every six months.

Preparedness is an ongoing responsibility.

About Ready Together Foundation

Ready Together Foundation is dedicated to building resilient communities through emergency preparedness, emergency relief and response, youth engagement, and outreach to vulnerable populations.

Our work focuses on:

- Community Emergency Preparedness
- Emergency Relief & Response
- Youth Preparedness & Leadership
- Vulnerable Population Outreach

Together, we are building stronger, safer, and more resilient communities.

Ready Together Foundation

Building Resilient Communities Together

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Preparedness is a journey, not a one-time event. Every small step you take today helps protect the people you care about tomorrow.