

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency

Vincent C. Gray
Mayor



Millicent W. West
Director

District Government Activates Multi-Agency Response to Extreme Heat and Humidity

Homeland Security, Department of Mental Health, Department of Parks and Recreation and Other Agencies Help Ensure Residents are Cool and Healthy

(Washington, DC) - The District of Columbia has activated its multi-agency heat plan in response to forecasts from the National Weather Service (NWS) calling for temperatures in the upper 90s to around 100 degrees over the next several days, with heat-index values predicted to reach as high as 115 degrees. The combination of hot temperatures and high humidity will combine to create a dangerous situation in which heat illnesses are possible. The multi-agency heat plan will remain in effect as long as the daily high temperature reaches 95 degrees or higher.

Pepco is urging customers to conserve energy whenever possible, as these extremely high temperatures are expected to push demand for electricity to near record levels across the entire Mid-Atlantic region.

The D.C. Department of Mental Health (DMH) is distributing hyperthermia information to community mental health providers and has posted health precautions on their website at dmh.dc.gov. DMH representatives also are visiting all 115 certified residential facilities that house people with mental illness to gauge preparations for the heat, such as an adequate water supply and functioning air conditioners. On Monday and Tuesday, DMH representatives checked about 50 facilities and directed five to fix air conditioning. In addition, each facility operator must submit a relocation plan for its residents in the event of loss of air conditioning or power.

Tips for Beating the Heat

Looking for a good way to cool off? D.C. Recreation Centers, D.C. Public Libraries and Senior Wellness Centers are all great places to beat the heat and are open to the public. These locations provide not only a cool place to rest but also provide water fountains and activities. Visit www.dc.gov to find a location near you.

Due to the extremely high temperatures beginning Thursday, July 21, the City's Department of Parks and Recreation has announced that it will be extending hours at their large outdoor pools beginning Thursday and continuing through Sunday:



Recreation Center Locations:	Thursday, July 21, 2011 Hours of Operation:	Friday, July 22, 2011 Hours of Operation:	Saturday, July 23, 2011 Hours of Operation:	Sunday, July 24, 2011 Hours of Operation:
Anacostia	11:00am – 8:30 pm	11:00am – 7:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Banneker	CLOSED	11:00 am – 8:30 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Barry Farms	11:00 am – 9:00 pm	11:00 am – 9:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Benning Park	11:00 am – 8:30 pm	11:00 am – 8:30 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Douglas	11:00 am – 8:00 pm	11:00 am – 8:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Ft. Dupont	11:00 am - 9:00 pm	11:00 am - 9:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Francis	11:00 am - 9:00 pm	11:00 am – 9:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Harry Thomas	11:00 am – 8:30 pm	11:00 am – 8:30 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Jellef	11:00 am – 8:30 pm	11:00 am – 8:30 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Kelly Miller	11:00 am – 8:00 pm	11:00 am – 8:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Langdon Park	11:00 am – 8:00 pm	11:00 am – 8:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Oxon Run	11:00 am – 8:30 pm	11:00 am – 8:30 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Randall	11:00 am – 8:00 pm	11:00 am – 8:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Theodore Hagans Jr.	11:00 am – 9:00 pm	11:00 am – 9:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Upshur	11:00 am – 9:00 pm	11:00 am – 9:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Volta Park	11:00 am – 9:00 pm	11:00 am – 9:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Protect your health when temperatures are extremely high! Keep cool, use common sense and be mindful of the following hot-weather-preparedness tips:

Drink Plenty of Fluids

- Increase your fluid intake, regardless of your activity level. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. During heavy exercise in a hot environment, drink two to four glasses (16-32 ounces) of cool fluids each hour
- Don't drink liquids that contain alcohol, caffeine or large amounts of sugar—these actually cause you to lose more body fluid. Also avoid very cold drinks, because they can cause stomach cramps.

Wear Appropriate Clothing and Sunscreen

- Wear as little clothing as possible when you are at home. Choose lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- If you must go outdoors, protect yourself from the sun by wearing a wide-brimmed hat (also keeps you cooler) along with sunglasses, and by putting on sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher (the most effective products say "broad spectrum" or "UVA/UVB protection" on their labels) 30 minutes prior to going out.

Schedule Outdoor Activities Carefully

- Try to limit your outdoor activity to morning and evening hours.
- Rest often in shady areas to allow your body a chance to recover.

Pace Yourself

- If you are not accustomed to working or exercising in a hot environment, start slowly and pick up the pace gradually.
- **If exertion in the heat makes your heart pound and leaves you gasping for breath, STOP all activity.**



Stay Cool Indoors

- Stay indoors and, if at all possible, stay in an air-conditioned place.
- If your home does not have air conditioning, go to the shopping mall, public library, recreation centers or other facilities.
- Call 311 to locate the “cooling centers” in your area.
- Electric fans may provide comfort, but when the temperature is in the high 90s, fans will not prevent heat-related illness.

Use a Buddy System

- When working in the heat, monitor the condition of your co-workers and have someone do the same for you.
- Heat-induced illness can cause a person to become confused or lose consciousness.

Monitor Those at High Risk

- Infants and young children are sensitive to the effects of high temperatures and rely on others to regulate their environments and provide adequate liquids.
- People 65 years of age or older may not compensate for heat stress efficiently and are less likely to sense and respond to change in temperature.
- People who overexert during work or exercise may become dehydrated and susceptible to heat sickness.
- Visit and/or contact high-risk adults twice a day and closely watch them for signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Infants and young children, of course, need much more frequent watching.

Do Not Leave Children or Pets in Cars

Even in cool temperatures, cars can heat up to dangerous temperatures very quickly. Even with the windows cracked open, interior temperatures can rise almost 20 degrees Fahrenheit within the first 10 minutes. Anyone left inside a vehicle is at risk for serious heat-related illnesses or even death. Children and pets who are left unattended in parked cars are at greatest risk for heat stroke, and possibly death. When traveling with children or animals, remember to do the following:

- Never leave infants, children or pets in a parked car, even if the windows are cracked open.
- To remind yourself that a child is in the car, keep a stuffed animal in the car seat. When the child is buckled in, place the stuffed animal in the front with the driver.
- When leaving your car, check to be sure everyone is out of the car. Do not overlook any children who have fallen asleep in the car.

Use Common Sense

Remember to keep cool and use common sense:

- Dress infants and children in cool, loose clothing and shade their heads and faces with hats or an umbrella.
- Limit sun exposure during mid-day hours and in places of potential severe exposure, such as beaches.
- Provide plenty of fresh water for your pets, and leave the water in a shady area.

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For “Cooling Center” locations or to report a problem, call the Mayor’s Citywide Call Center at 311. For additional emergency-preparedness information, visit the Emergency Information Center at www.72hours.dc.gov.

