

Your best defense against the heat is to stay cool and hydrated.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2012, an historic heat wave engulfed the Midwest, beginning at the end of June continuing through the July 4th holiday. The heat wave was responsible for 18 deaths in the St. Louis Metropolitan Area.

Every jurisdiction in Missouri and Illinois is vulnerable to extreme heat. Heat harms us by reducing our bodies' ability to maintain a normal temperature, reducing air quality, and causing power outages through increased demands for electricity.

We are all vulnerable to the impacts of extreme heat. However, some populations are at greater risk.

When perspiration evaporates it cools the body, helping one's body to maintain a normal temperature. Older individuals are most vulnerable to the dangers of heat, due to a diminished ability to perspire. Infants, young children, people with chronic health problems (especially pre-existing heart disease) and individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs are more vulnerable to the effects of heat.

As the temperatures rise, stay cool and safe.

- Avoid going outside during the hottest times of the day.
- If you have to work outside, use a buddy system. Partners can monitor each other and lend a hand when needed.
- Stay in an air-conditioned area during the hottest hours of the day. If you do not have air conditioning in your home, go to a public place, such as a recreation center or senior center to stay cool. Your community may establish cooling centers during heat emergencies. To find a location near you go to: <https://ogj.ia.mo.gov/DHSS/coolingCenter/> or <http://www.illinois.gov/keepcool/Pages/default.aspx> or call 211.
- Free accessible transportation is often provided to cooling centers. To learn more call 211.
- Create a heat wave emergency kit, a checklist is provided on the next page. In addition to the items listed, populations at greater risk should keep specialized items ready to account for their unique needs, including extra wheelchair batteries, oxygen, catheters, medication, food for service animals, a list of the type and model numbers of medical devices, etc.

Remember these three simple tips to staying safe when the temperatures rise.

1. Drink 2-4 glasses of cool, non-alcoholic fluids every hour



2. Cut down on exercise and other physically demanding



3. Wear light, loose-fitting clothing



HEAT WAVE EMERGENCY ITEMS TO ADD TO YOUR KIT

Find and collect the items below and place them in your Emergency Preparedness Kit when temperatures start to rise. Store the kit in an easily accessible area in your home or apartment. Collect:



1–2 extra bottles of water to use for drinking, cooling down body, wetting clothes, wetting towels, etc.



1 large towel and 3–4 small towels to dampen with water and apply to forehead, armpits, groin, etc. also roll a dampen towel into pillow to elevate feet



Hand or mini fan to help cool your body



Drinking straw for sipping water while lying down



Cooler to fill with ice as soon as power goes out for refrigerated medications, formulas, etc.



Plastic bags to fill with cold water and/or ice to create makeshift coolers



Flashlight in case power goes out, which can happen during heat waves due to high demand on the power grid



Batteries for flashlights, radio, battery-powered fans or mobility equipment

Learn more tips on how to keep cool at <http://createthegood.org/toolkit/help-someone-stay-cool-during-extreme-heat> or <http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/heat-wave>.