

Hot Weather Warnings for Toronto

Toronto's hot weather response plan coordinates the efforts of City of Toronto and community agencies to prevent illness during periods of extremely hot weather.

When hot weather becomes oppressive due to high temperatures and other factors, the Medical Officer of Health issues a **heat alert**. It may be upgraded to an **extreme heat alert**.

A **Heat Alert** means that the conditions brought on by a hot air mass are such that the likelihood of additional deaths, above those that are typical for the same time of year, is more than 65 percent.

An **Extreme Heat Alert** means that the conditions brought on by a hot air mass are such that the likelihood of additional deaths, above those that are typical for the same time of year, is more than 90 percent.

If you or a tenant begins to feel ill, faint, have difficulty breathing or feel disoriented visit your doctor or nearest hospital right away.

In an emergency call 911

For more information about the health effects of extreme heat call
Canadian Red Cross Heat Information Line
416-480-2615

Summer Safety Tips to Beat the Heat

Advice to Landlords

Enjoy a safe summer

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In the summer the combination of extreme heat and humidity can be very dangerous for residents of buildings with inadequate cooling.

People at risk during these weather conditions include:

- The elderly
- People with chronic illnesses (such as diabetes, heart and respiratory conditions) or people unable to move or change position by themselves
- Infants and preschool children
- People who exercise vigorously or are involved in strenuous work outdoors for prolonged periods
- People taking certain medications, for example, for mental health conditions
- Homeless or marginally housed persons

Helping tenants avoid heat-related illness

As an owner or operator you can take these simple actions to decrease the risk of heat-related illness to your residents:

- Provide residents access to a cooler spot for several hours at a time, e.g. a common room with air conditioning or a basement area.
- Keep windows in hallways slightly open to allow air to circulate.
- Use fans to draw cool air at night, but do not rely on a fan as a primary cooling device during extended periods of excessive heat.

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- Provide heat safety information to residents or post the information in common areas e.g. by the elevator, in the lobby.
 - Have building staff check on at-risk residents every few hours.
 - Advise residents to drink lots of water and natural fruit juices even if they don't feel thirsty.
 - Ask residents, to keep windows open and the drapes drawn.
 - Keep lights off. Don't use stove or oven.
 - Suggest residents cool down with cool baths, showers, foot baths or by placing cool, wet towels on their necks or underarms.
 - Suggest that they avoid the blazing sun or heat and go outside early in the morning or evening when it is cooler. Wear a hat. Seek shade.
 - Suggest going to air conditioned or cool places such as shopping malls, libraries, community centres or a friend's place.
 - Suggest they avoid intense physical activity.
 - Remind them to never leave a child in a parked car or sleeping outside in direct sunlight.
 - If they take medication remind them to consult their doctor or pharmacist about possible side effects due to heat.

Even a few hours in a cooler environment during extremely hot weather lowers the core body temperature and helps save lives.

Symptoms of heat illness:

- Rapid breathing or difficulty breathing
- Weakness, dizziness or fainting
- More tiredness than usual
- Headache
- Confusion
- Nausea

How to help someone with heat illness:

- Call for help
 - Give the person sips of cool water (not ice cold water)
 - Remove extra clothing from the person
 - Cool the person with lukewarm water, by sponging or bathing
 - Move the person to a cooler location if possible
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