

Prepare for Severe Weather: Extreme Heat



COLCHESTER
REGIONAL
EMO



April 2021

72 Hours

Nova Scotians are encouraged to be ready to cope on their own for at least the first 72 hours of an emergency

Causes: Humidity increases the feeling of heat as measured by a heat index

Higher Risk

Older adults may be faced with compounding factors that could put them at increased risk during extreme heat events. These factors may include chronic illness, medications that interfere with the body's cooling mechanisms, social isolations, and poverty.

Infants and young children have unique physiological characteristics that make them dependant on their caregivers. This can make them more likely to be at risk during a heat event.

People with breathing difficulties, heart problems, and psychiatric illnesses are at higher risk of heat-related health effects.

People who work outdoors (eg, construction, road repair, property maintenance) and physically active individuals who exercise in the heat could face greater environmental heat exposure and physical strain.

During

Find air conditioning, if possible.

Avoid strenuous activities.

Watch yourself and others for heat illness.

Wear light clothing, preferably a material that breathes.

Drink plenty of fluids.

Never leave people or pets inside a car, regardless of how long you intend to be away.

If you are outside, find shade.

Do not use electric fans when the temperature outside is more than 35 C. Fans create air flow, but do not reduce body temperature.

Know the signs

Heat Exhaustion:

Signs: Skin rash, muscle cramps, dizziness or fainting, nausea or vomiting, heavy sweating, headache, rapid breathing and heartbeat, extreme thirst, dark urine and decreased urination.

Actions: If you experience any of these symptoms during extreme heat, immediately **move to a cool place** and **drink liquids**; water is best.

Heat Stroke:

Signs: High body temperature, confusion and lack of coordination, dizziness/ fainting, no sweating but very hot, red skin

Actions: Heat stroke is a medical emergency! Call 911!

Extreme Heat



Tips for staying safe during an extreme heat warning

Prepare for the heat the best you can

Check in regularly to local weather forecasts and alerts so you are able to act accordingly and take extra care.

If you own an air conditioner, make sure you test that it is working when officials say there may be a heat warning in the future.

If you don't have an air conditioner, find an air-conditioned area close by where you can cool off like a mall, café, or public library.

Know the signs of heat illnesses

Signs of **heat exhaustion** include skin rash, muscle cramps, dizziness or fainting, nausea or vomiting, heavy sweating, headache, rapid breathing and heartbeat, extreme thirst, dark urine and decreased urination.

Signs of **Heat Stroke** include high body temperature, confusion and lack of coordination, dizziness/ fainting, no sweating but very hot, red skin

Pay attention to how you, and those around you, feel

Check in on your neighbours, friends, and any older family members to make sure they are not experiencing any heat illnesses. Remember to keep a close eye on those who are chronically ill, infants and young children, and elderly family members and friends.

If you notice anyone showing signs of **heat stroke**, contact 911 immediately!

Drink lots of liquids; water is best

Drinking water helps replenish the fluids lost by excessive sweating. If you don't get enough water, you may become dehydrated, and the combination of hot temperatures and dehydration can lead to heat-related illnesses. Drinks with electrolytes, like Gatorade, can also be helpful.

Stay Cool

Some of the best ways to stay cool include:

- Wear loose-fitting, light-coloured clothing made of breathable fabric
- Take cool showers or baths until you feel refreshed
- Plan strenuous activities for cooler days, or choose a cooler location like a place with air conditioning or shade
- Spend a few hours in a cool place like a shaded area, pool, or airconditioned building