

RIVER OAKS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPT.

FROM JAMES MYRICK, EMC



Your National Weather Service in Fort Worth will initiate alert procedures when the daytime apparent temperature (Heat Index) is expected to **reach 105°F** or higher for **two consecutive days**, with an in-between overnight minimum ambient temperature of at least **78°F or above**.

Thinking About Yourself

- **Avoid the Heat.** Stay out of the heat and indoors as much as possible. Spend time in an air conditioned space. Only two hours a day in an air-conditioned space can significantly reduce the risk of heat-related illness. Shopping Malls offer relief if your home is not air-conditioned. If air conditioning is not available, stay on the lowest floor out of the sunshine. Remember, electric fans do not cool, they just blow hot air around.
- **Dress for the heat.** Wear loose-fitting clothes that cover as much skin as possible. Lightweight, light-colored clothing that reflects heat and sunlight and helps maintain normal body temperature. Protect face and head by wearing a wide-brimmed hat. Avoid too much sunshine. Sunburn slows the skin's ability to cool itself. Use a sunscreen lotion with a high SPF (sun protection factor) rating.
- **Drink FOR the Heat.** Drink plenty of water and natural juices, even if you don't feel thirsty. Even under moderately strenuous outdoor activity, the rate your body can absorb fluids is **less** than the rate it **loses** water due to perspiration. However, if you have epilepsy or heart, kidney, or liver disease; are on fluid-restrictive diets; or have a problem with fluid retention should consult a doctor before increasing liquid intake.
- **Do not drink IN the Heat.** Avoid alcoholic beverages and beverages with caffeine, such as coffee, tea, and cola. Alcohol and caffeine **constrict blood vessels** near the skin reducing the amount of heat the body can release. Although beer and alcohol beverages appear to satisfy thirst, they actually cause further body dehydration.
- **Eat for the Heat.** Eat small meals more often. Avoid foods that are high in protein because they increase metabolic heat. Avoid using salt tablets, unless directed to do so by a physician.

- **Living in the Heat.** Slow down. Reduce, eliminate, or reschedule strenuous activities such as running, biking and lawn care work when it heats up. The best times for such activities are during early morning and late evening hours. Take cool baths or showers and use cool, wet towels.
- **Learn the symptoms** of heat disorders and know how to give first aid.

Thinking About Others

- **Do not leave children in a closed vehicle**, even for a few minutes. This is a "No-Brainer". Temperatures inside a closed vehicle can reach 140°F-190°F degrees within 30 minutes on a hot, sunny day. However, despite this common sense rule, deaths from heat occur almost every Summer when someone leaves their child in a closed vehicle.
- When outdoors, **protect small children** from the sun, their skin is sensitive.
- **Help your pets keep their cool.** It will "feel" as hot for them as it will for you. As with children, do not leave your pets in a closed vehicle. Be sure your animals have access to shade and a water bowl full of cold, clean water. Dogs don't tolerate heat well because they don't sweat. Their bodies get hot and stay hot. During summer heat, avoid outdoor games or jogging with your pet. If you would not walk across hot, sunbaked asphalt barefoot, don't make your dog walk on it either. (Dogs can also get blisters on their paws from hot pavement.)
- **Learn the symptoms** of heat disorders and know how to give first aid.

Thinking About Your Environment

- **Protect windows.** Hang shades, draperies, awnings, or louvers on windows that receive morning or afternoon sun. Outdoor awnings or louvers can reduce the heat entering the house by as much as 80%.
- **Conserve electricity.** During periods of extreme heat, people tend to use a lot more power for air conditioning which can lead to a power shortage or outage. Vacuum air conditioner filters weekly during periods of high use.
- **Keep lights turned down** or turned off.
- **Avoid using the oven.**
- **Learn the symptoms** of heat disorders and know how to give first aid.