



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY



MASSACHUSETTS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
400 Worcester Road

Framingham, MA 01702-5399
Tel: 508-820-2000 Fax: 508-820-2030
Website: www.mass.gov/mema

Deval L. Patrick
Governor

Kurt N. Schwartz
Director

Timothy P. Murray
Lieutenant Governor

Andrea J. Cabral
Secretary

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CONTACT: Peter Judge, MEMA PIO
(508) 820-2002

MEMA ADVISES CAUTION DURING EXTREMELY HOT WEATHER

FRAMINGHAM, MA – With the extremely hot weather forecast for the Commonwealth, the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is advising people to be cautious during this period of extreme heat, and is offering some tips to help keep cool and safe.

“A few common sense measures can reduce heat-related problems, especially for the elderly, the very young and people with respiratory ailments, who are more susceptible to the effects of high temperatures,” said MEMA Director Kurt Schwartz. “If this extreme weather continues over an extended period, some communities may be setting up cooling centers to assist those seeking relief from the oppressive heat.”

Here are some tips to follow during hot, humid weather:

- Slow down, avoid strenuous activity. Do not try to do too much on a hot day.
- Wear lightweight, loose-fitting, light-colored clothing. Light colors will reflect heat and sunlight and help maintain normal body temperature. Protect your face with a wide-brimmed hat.
- Drink plenty of water regularly and often, even if you do not feel thirsty. Attempt to stay hydrated.
- Limit intake of alcoholic beverages. They can actually dehydrate your body.
- Eat well-balanced, light, regular meals. Avoid high protein foods that increase metabolic heat.
- Stay indoors as much as possible.
- If you do not have air conditioning, stay on your lowest floor, out of the sun. Electric fans do not cool the air, but they do help evaporate perspiration, which cools your body.
- Go to a place where you can get relief from the heat, such as air conditioned schools, libraries, theaters and other community facilities that may offer refuge during the warmest times of the day.
- Check with your community for information about possible local ‘cooling centers’.

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- Cover windows that receive morning or afternoon sun with drapes, shades, awnings or louvers. Outdoor awnings or louvers can reduce the heat that enters a home by up to 80%.
- Avoid too much sunshine. Sunburn slows the skin's ability to cool itself. If you are outside, use sunscreen lotion with a high SPF (Sun Protection Factor) rating.
- Never leave children or pets alone in a closed vehicle.
- Do not leave pets outside for extended periods. Make sure that pets have plenty of drinking water.
- Check on family, friends and neighbors.

In normal weather, the body's internal thermostat produces perspiration that evaporates and cools the body. However, in extreme heat and high humidity, evaporation is slowed and the body must work extra hard to maintain normal temperature, which may lead to heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. If you believe you, or anyone you are with, is experiencing a heat-related medical emergency, promptly call 911, and if possible, move to a cooler place.

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is the state agency responsible for coordinating federal, state, local, voluntary and private resources during emergencies and disasters in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. MEMA provides leadership to: develop plans for effective response to all hazards, disasters or threats; train emergency personnel to protect the public; provide information to the citizenry; and assist individuals, families, businesses and communities to mitigate against, prepare for, and respond to and recover from emergencies, both natural and man made. For additional information about MEMA and Preparedness, go to www.mass.gov/mema. Also, continue to follow MEMA updates on *Twitter* at www.twitter.com/MassEMA; *Facebook* at www.facebook.com/MassachusettsEMA. Download the free *ping4alert!* app to your Smartphone to receive important weather alerts and emergency messages from MEMA. Easy instructions are available at www.mass.gov/mema/mobileapp.