



# At-A-Glance Extreme Heat



**A Preparedness Resource from The Cuyahoga County Office of Emergency Management**

## Facts about Extreme Heat...

- Extreme Heat occurs when temperatures reach 10 degrees or more above the average high temperature for a region over an extended period of time.
- Each year Extreme Heat is responsible for hundreds of deaths in the United States.
- Extreme Heat paired with high humidity makes it difficult for the body to maintain its normal temperature.
- Overexposure to Extreme Heat can cause several heat-related illnesses, including: Heat Stroke, Heat Exhaustion, and Heat Cramps.

## Did you know?

*On average, Extreme Heat claims more lives each year than floods, lightning, tornadoes, and hurricanes combined.*

## Heat-related Illnesses...

Knowing the differences between heat-related illnesses is critical when determining the need for medical care.

- **Heat stroke:** also referred to as "Sun Stroke," degrades the body's temperature control system, which regulates perspiration. A victim experiencing heat stroke can suffer brain damage or death if they do not receive proper medical care.
- **Heat Exhaustion:** typically occurs when people overexert themselves in hot, humid weather conditions. Heat exhaustion causes an increase in blood flow to the skin, resulting in a deprivation of blood in the vital organs. If untreated, heat exhaustion may cause a victim to suffer heat stroke.
- **Heat Cramps:** are muscular pains and spasms due to heavy exertion. Although heat cramps are non-life threatening, they are often a precursor to more serious heat-related health concerns.

## What you can do...

### Before Extreme Heat:

- Cover your home's 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%).
- Install temporary window reflectors (e.g. aluminum foil-covered cardboard) between windows and drapes to reflect heat away from your home.
- Weather-strip doors and windows to keep cool air in your home.

### During Extreme Heat:

- Stay indoors as much as possible and limit exposure to the sun. If air conditioning is not available, stay on the lowest floor of your home as it will be the coolest.
- Avoid strenuous outside work during the hottest part of the day (between 11:00AM - 4:00PM).
- When outside, wear loose-fitting, lightweight clothing and drink plenty of water.
- **Never** leave pets or children alone in closed vehicles.
- Check on family, friends, and neighbors who do not have air conditioning.

Sources: [nws.noaa.gov](http://nws.noaa.gov), [fema.gov](http://fema.gov), [ready.gov](http://ready.gov)

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