

# Hot Weather Tips

Missouri and Illinois 2-1-1 and United Way of Greater St. Louis want you to take care during heat advisories, warnings and emergencies. For information on what to do during heat waves or find a cooling site, dial 2-1-1 or from a cell phone other than AT&T call 1-800-427-4626. For senior citizens worried about not being able to pay for air-conditioning, electric bill assistance information is available by calling Missouri or Illinois 2-1-1 by dialing 2-1-1 or those on cell phones other than AT&T call: 1-800-427-4626.

Below are tips, compiled by Operation Weather Survival (OWS) to help keep you – especially senior citizens – cool during heat waves. OWS is a coalition of local government, faith-based and charitable organizations.

- **Stay cool** — Stay out of the direct sun and heat. Spend as many hours as possible in a cool place. Minimize physical activity. Take cool baths or showers; use cool towels. Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose fitting clothing.
- **Drink plenty of water/natural juices** — Cool drinks help to replenish fluid losses due to increased perspiration in high temperature. Drink at least 6-8 glasses of fluids every day. Avoid alcohol and caffeine as they cause your body to lose more water. Keep a few bottles of water in your freezer — if the power goes out, move them to your refrigerator and keep the doors shut.
- **Eat regularly** — Prepare easy, cool, light items. Fresh vegetable salads, tuna and meat salads, fresh fruit mixtures, whole grain products and cheeses can all contribute to cool nutritious summer meals. Hot soups and casseroles and other products served hot can make you warmer at mealtime. Avoid using cooking ovens. Avoid using salt tablets – unless directed to do so by a physician.
- **Develop a buddy system with family, friends, or neighbors** — Develop a personal support network of people who will check in with you at least twice a day throughout warm weather periods, and plan how you will help each other in an emergency. Watch for signs of heat stroke and/or heat exhaustion. Call for help when needed.
- **Plan Ahead** — Ask your doctor about any prescription medicine you keep refrigerated (most medicine will be fine to leave in a closed refrigerator for at least 3 hours). Make plans for any animals and pets. Keep a battery-operated radio on hand to hear news reports and a flashlight handy for lighting. Remember extra batteries. Do not use candles due to fire hazards. Cordless phones may not operate during power outages so keep a corded phone handy or plugged in to another jack.
- **Keep Cool** — Close your curtains and windows in the morning to keep the sun and heat out of your home. Open windows and doors at night to cool inside temperatures. Keep electric lights off or turned down. If you don't have air conditioning leave your home and go to a cool safe place, senior centers, shopping malls, etc. are options.

- **Call 911** if you or anyone you know needs medical attention.