



# Responding to Heat Conditions

Excessive heat can pose a public health threat, causing serious adverse health effects, or even death. To address heat conditions, the City of San Antonio’s Metropolitan Health District, the Office of Emergency Management, Bexar County, the National Weather Service and other community stakeholders coordinate efforts to increase public awareness on health risks and where to find places to stay cool during periods of excessive heat.

Heat conditions	Action steps
<b>Excessive Heat Outlooks- Be Aware!</b>	The outlooks are issued when the potential exists for an excessive heat event in the next 3-7 days. An Outlook provides information to those who need considerable lead-time to prepare for the event.
<b>Heat Advisory- Take Action!</b>	A Heat Advisory is issued within 12 hours of the onset of extremely dangerous heat conditions. The general rule of thumb for this Advisory is when the maximum heat index temperature is expected to be 100° or higher for at least 2 days, and night time air temperatures will not drop below 75°; however, these criteria vary across the country, especially for areas that are not used to dangerous heat conditions. Take precautions to avoid heat illness. If you don't take precautions, you may become seriously ill or even die.
<b>Excessive Heat Watches- Be Prepared!</b>	Heat watches are issued when conditions are favorable for an excessive heat event in the next 24 to 72 hours. A Watch is used when the risk of a heat wave has increased but its occurrence and timing is still uncertain.
<b>Excessive Heat Warning- Take Action!</b>	An Excessive Heat Warning is issued within 12 hours of the onset of extremely dangerous heat conditions. The general rule of thumb for this Warning is when the maximum heat index temperature is expected to be 105° or higher for at least 2 days and night time air temperatures will not drop below 75°; however, these criteria vary across the country, especially for areas not used to extreme heat conditions. If you don't take precautions immediately when conditions are extreme, you may become seriously ill or even die.

For more information on heat criteria visit: [Weather.gov/RH/SR\\_criteria](https://www.weather.gov/RH/SR_criteria)

## Places to Stay Cool

When temperatures rise to potentially dangerous levels, it is important to stay inside an air-conditioned space whenever possible. There are currently over 30 San Antonio locations for the public to use to stay cool. These include:

- City Libraries
- Senior Centers
- Community Centers

**NOTE:** [Via's Personal Trip Planner](#) can help you find a bus route to a location near you.



## ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO STAY COOL

Additional opportunities to stay cool include the City’s following free facilities:

- Splash Pads
- Swimming Pools

For locations, visitor information, and hours of operation, please visit the [Parks & Recreation Department](#).

# Heat Cramps, Exhaustion, Stroke

During extremely hot and humid weather, your body's ability to cool itself is challenged. When the body heats too rapidly to cool itself properly, or when too much fluid or salt is lost through dehydration or sweating, body temperature rises and you or someone you care about may experience a heat-related illness. It is important to know the symptoms of excessive heat exposure and the appropriate responses. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides a list of warning signs and symptoms of heat illness, and recommended first aid steps. Some of these symptoms and steps are listed below.

The infographic is divided into two main sections: Heat Exhaustion (orange background) and Heat Stroke (red background). In the center is a stylized human figure with a red head and orange body, showing symptoms like dizziness (spinning head), thirst (water bottle), and nausea (vomiting). Below the figure, a note states: "Heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke." To the right, another note states: "Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not given."

Heat Exhaustion	Heat Stroke
<b>ACT FAST</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Move to a cooler area</li><li>• Loosen clothing</li><li>• Sip cool water</li><li>• Seek medical help if symptoms don't improve</li></ul>	<b>ACT FAST</b> <b>CALL 911</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Move person to a cooler area</li><li>• Loosen clothing and remove extra layers</li><li>• Cool with water or ice</li></ul>
<i>Dizziness</i> <i>Thirst</i> <i>Heavy Sweating</i> <i>Nausea</i> <i>Weakness</i>	<i>Confusion</i> <i>Dizziness</i> <i>Becomes Unconscious</i>

## Heat Cramps

Heat cramps may be the first sign of heat-related illness, and may lead to heat exhaustion or stroke.

**Symptoms:** Painful muscle cramps and spasms usually in legs and abdomen and Heavy sweating.

**First Aid:** Apply firm pressure on cramping muscles or gently massage to relieve spasm. Give sips of water unless the person complains of nausea, then stop giving water.

**Seek immediate medical attention if cramps last longer than 1 hour.**

## Heat Exhaustion

**Symptoms:** Heavy sweating, Weakness or tiredness, cool, pale, clammy skin; fast, weak pulse, muscle cramps, dizziness, nausea or vomiting, headache, fainting,

**First Aid:** Move person to a cooler environment, preferably a well air conditioned room. Loosen clothing. Apply cool, wet cloths or have person sit in a cool bath. Offer sips of water.

**Seek immediate medical attention if the person vomits, symptoms worsen or last longer than 1 hour.**

## Heat Stroke

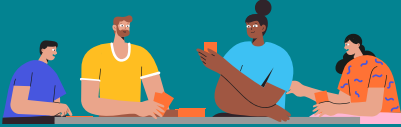
**Symptoms:** Throbbing headache, confusion, nausea, dizziness, body temperature above 103°F, hot, red, dry or damp skin, rapid and strong pulse, fainting, loss of consciousness.

**First Aid:** **Call 911 or get the victim to a hospital immediately.** Heat stroke is a severe medical emergency. Delay can be fatal. Move the victim to a cooler, preferably air-conditioned, environment. Reduce body temperature with cool cloths or bath. Use fan if heat index temperatures are below the high 90s. A fan can make you hotter at higher temperatures. Do **NOT** give fluids.

Using a fan to blow air in someone's direction may actually make them hotter if heat index temperatures are above the 90s. For more information on all of these heat related illnesses, see the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) site.

# If the Weather is Extremely Hot

- Check local weather for critical updates from the National Weather Service (NWS).



- Never leave anyone alone in closed vehicles.

- Stay indoors as much as possible and limit exposure to the sun.

- Postpone outdoor games and activities.

- Eat well-balanced, light, and regular meals.



- Drink plenty of water, even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid drinks with caffeine. Persons who have epilepsy or heart, kidney, or liver disease; are on fluid-restricted diets; or have a problem with fluid retention should consult a doctor before increasing liquid intake.

- Limit intake of alcoholic beverages.



- Dark colored clothing absorbs the sun's rays, dress in loose-fitting, lightweight, and light-colored clothes that cover as much skin as possible.



- Protect face and head by wearing a wide-brimmed hat.

- Avoid demanding physical activities during the warmest part of the day.

- Use a buddy system when working in extreme heat and take frequent breaks.

- Check on family, friends, and neighbors who do not have air conditioning and who spend much of their time alone.

- Consider spending the warmest part of the day in public buildings such as libraries, schools, movie theaters, shopping malls, and other community facilities.

# Community Resources for Excessive Heat Events

Organization	Phone Number	Details
City Public Service (CPS) Customer Service Line	210-353-2222	Financial assistance with utility bills
Bexar County Dept. of Community Resources	210-335-6770	Utility Assistance Energy Crisis Program
San Antonio Water System (SAWS)	210-704-7297	Financial planning assistance with water bills
City of San Antonio Center for Working Families	210-207-7830	Financial assistance
Humane Society San Antonio	210-226-7461	Tips for your pets
City of San Antonio Animal Care Services 4710 State Highway 151, San Antonio, 78227	210-207-4738	Tips for your pets
City of San Antonio 311 Line	210-207-6000	Report Animal Cruelty
City of San Antonio Dept. of Human Services 106 South St. Mary's Street, 7th Floor San Antonio, TX 78205	210-207-7172	Information on Senior Services
211 Texas/United Way Help Line	210-227-4357	Request a portable fan, PROJECT COOL
Alamo Service Connection Bexar Area Agency on Aging	210-477-3275	Cool Neighbor Campaign-Door Hanger and Thermometer explaining Heat Related signs and symptoms. Information and referrals for seniors over age 60 for utility assistance and home weatherization programs