

Governor's Office of Homeland Security
and Emergency Preparedness
State of Louisiana

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Dangerous Heat Levels Impact Louisiana

Baton Rouge (August 12, 2019)- The Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) is urging everyone to use caution if working or taking part in any outdoor activities due to dangerous heat indices of 110 or higher in some places. The National Weather Service (NWS) offices covering Louisiana have issued Heat Advisories due to the conditions.

"Heat related health issues can develop quickly when heat indices get this high," said GOHSEP Director Jim Waskom. "We urge everyone to use caution and watch out for each other as these conditions continue. Some groups are more susceptible to heat problems. They include children, those 65 or older, people with existing health conditions and people who are overweight. Anyone who exercises or overexerts during work could be vulnerable. Remember to take frequent breaks, stay hydrated, look out for others if they show signs of heat-related problems."

Here is information from the National Safety Council on heat related medical issues:

Heat Exhaustion

When the body loses excessive water and salt, usually due to sweating, **heat exhaustion** can occur. Signs and symptoms include:

- Sweating

- Pale, ashen or moist skin
- Muscle cramps (especially for those working or exercising outdoors in high temperatures)
- Fatigue, weakness or exhaustion
- Headache, dizziness or fainting
- Nausea or vomiting
- Rapid heart rate

Uncontrolled **heat exhaustion** can evolve into heat stroke, so make sure to treat victims quickly:

- Move victims to a shaded or air-conditioned area
- Give water or other cool, nonalcoholic beverages
- Apply wet towels, or have victims take a cool shower

Heat Stroke

Seek medical help immediately if someone is suffering from **heat stroke**. Signs include:

- Body temperature above 103 degrees
- Skin that is flushed, dry and hot to the touch; sweating has usually stopped
- Rapid breathing
- Headache, dizziness, confusion or other signs of altered mental status
- Irrational or belligerent behavior
- Convulsions or unresponsiveness

Immediately take action:

- Call 911
- Move the victim to a cool place
- Remove unnecessary clothing
- Immediately cool the victim, preferably by immersing up to the neck in cold water (with the help of a second rescuer)
- If immersion in cold water is not possible, place the victim in a cold shower or move to a cool area and cover as much of the body as possible with cold, wet towels
- Keep cooling until body temperature drops to 101 degrees
- Monitor the victim's breathing and be ready to give CPR if needed

DO NOT:

- Force the victim to drink liquids
- Apply rubbing alcohol to the skin
- Allow victims to take pain relievers or salt tablets

Here is the latest on the hot conditions from the four NWS offices covering Louisiana:

NWS Shreveport:

Dangerous heat index values have prompted us to issue our first Excessive Heat Warning of the year for Monday. Temperatures will be over 100 degrees in places, with heat index values over 110 degrees. Limit outdoor activities. Be sure to stay hydrated. Very hot and humid conditions are expected to continue through Tuesday afternoon. A weak cold front could bring some relief and a chance of showers and thunderstorms from the north starting Tuesday evening.

NWS Jackson, MS (Northeast Louisiana):

Mostly sunny and hot conditions are anticipated today with isolated showers and thunderstorms mainly during the afternoon. High temperatures will range in the middle to upper 90s with heat indices from 105 to 115 degrees.

NWS Lake Charles:

Sinking air associated with an upper level ridge of high pressure has warranted the issuance of a Heat Advisory for Monday. Heat indices will once again peak in the 105-110 range.

NWS New Orleans:

Another hot day is in store for the area. A Heat Advisory is in effect through 8 PM this evening for heat indices in the 107 to 113 range today. Please take the proper precautions to protect yourself. Afternoon storms will again get going in the late afternoon.

Find more tips on weather and preparedness on GOHSEP's Facebook and Twitter accounts. You can receive emergency alerts on most smartphones and tablets by downloading the new Alert FM App. It is free for basic service. The Get A Game Plan App is another resource available to help you and your family prepare for any type of emergency. You can download the Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Guide and find other information at www.getagameplan.org.

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