



# SAN BENITO COUNTY

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

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*Healthy People in Healthy Communities*

## San Benito County Public Health Services and the Office of Emergency Services Prepare Residents for Extreme Heat during Labor Day Weekend

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### Health Advisory

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September 1, 2017

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SAN BENITO COUNTY – The National Weather Service has issued an Excessive Heat Warning for hot weather beginning today through the Labor Day weekend. An Excessive Heat Warning is issued when there is a prolonged period of hot temperatures where people can become seriously ill if precautions are not taken. Temperatures are expected reach up to 115 degrees, with the hottest days expected today and Saturday. This may create a dangerous situation in which heat-related illnesses are possible.

San Benito County Public Health Services reminds residents to take the necessary precautions to avoid heat-related illnesses. Those planning to celebrate this upcoming weekend outdoors are urged to use precautions.

Elderly people, infants and children, and people with chronic medical conditions are more prone to heat-related stress and injuries. Residents are encouraged to drink plenty of cool, nonalcoholic beverages regardless of activity level to help prevent heat related illness and injuries. Pets require shade and extra water and should never be left in a closed, parked car. Pets, crops, and livestock may demand extra care and need to stay hydrated.

Over the next several days the high temperature forecasts may set new records for the area, and, in preparation, Public Health Services encourages everyone to be on the lookout for heat-related illnesses, either in themselves or their families and friends – and what to do should that happen.

#### HEAT CRAMPS

Heat cramps occur as muscular pains and spasms due to heavy exertion. Although heat cramps are the least severe, they are often the first signal that the body is having trouble with the heat. Symptoms include painful cramps, especially in the legs, and flushed, moist skin. Treatment involves moving to a cool place to rest. Remove excess clothing and place cool cloths on skin and fan skin.

#### HEAT STROKE

Heat stroke is a serious illness characterized by a body temperature greater than 105 degrees. Symptoms may include dry red skin, convulsions, disorientation, delirium and coma. Onset of heat stroke can be rapid; serious symptoms can occur within minutes. Treatment involves the rapid lowering of body temperature by taking a cool bath or applying wet towels to the body. Keep victims of heat stroke in a cool area and call 911 immediately.

#### HEAT EXHAUSTION

Heat exhaustion is a milder form of heat stroke that may develop due to a combination of several days with high temperatures and dehydration in an individual. Signs of heat exhaustion include extreme weakness, muscle cramps, nausea or headache. Victims may also vomit or faint. Heat exhaustion is treated with plenty of liquids and rest in a cool, shaded area.

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Consider the following tips and suggestions to avoid heat-related illness, including:

- Stay indoors as much as possible and limit exposure to the sun
- Drink plenty of fluids and replace salts and minerals in your body. Anyone on a fluid-restricted diet or who has a problem with fluid retention should consult a doctor before increasing liquid intake. People with epilepsy or heart, kidney, or liver disease should also consult a doctor before increasing liquid intake. A sports beverage can replace the salt and minerals you lose in sweat. Avoid using salt tablets unless directed to do so by a physician
- Limit intake of alcoholic beverages
- Closely monitor a local radio station or TV station for the latest information.
- 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
- Spend time in air-conditioned places. If you cannot afford an air conditioner, spend some time each day in an air-conditioned environment such as public libraries, shopping malls or other indoor public spaces
- Stay on the lowest floor, out of the sunshine if air conditioning is not available.
- Check on family, friends, and neighbors who do not have air conditioning and who spend much of their time alone
- NEVER leave children or pets alone in closed vehicles
- Avoid strenuous work during the warmest part of the day. Use a buddy system when working in extreme heat, and take frequent breaks
- Eat well-balanced, light, and regular meals. Hot, heavy meals add heat to your body. Avoid using salt tablets unless directed to do so by a physician
- Check on family, friends, and neighbors who do not have air conditioning and who spend much of their time alone

## LOCAL COOLING CENTERS

The Veterans Memorial Building will be the primary Cooling Center for Hollister and San Juan School for San Juan Bautista. "We will open the cooling center based on a number of factors including calls to 911 and blackouts," stated Kevin O'Neil, Emergency Services Manager with Office of Emergency Services. "Residents can monitor OES' facebook and twitter for information the opening of a cooling center".

For more information on how to stay safe during the heat wave and to avoid heat-related illness, visit [www.CDC.gov/ExtremeHeat](http://www.CDC.gov/ExtremeHeat).

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