

AND THEN...

the heat was just too much

Extreme heat doesn't call ahead. That's why Ontarians plan ahead.

Extreme heat events are becoming more frequent and severe in Ontario. Heat warnings are issued when daytime temperatures reach 29-31°C, depending on the region, for two or more days in a row with no overnight relief. High humidity can also play a factor.

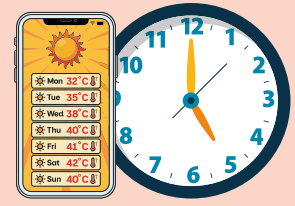
Why we need to prepare

Prolonged exposure to extreme heat can lead to severe health issues, including dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stroke, which untreated, can be fatal. Everyone is at risk, however some groups are especially vulnerable – including older adults, young children, people with chronic health conditions, outdoor workers, the unhoused and people without access to air conditioning.

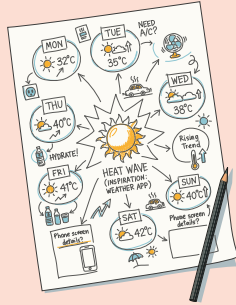
We can't turn the heat down, but we can prepare for it. The following steps can help keep you, your family and your community safe. Because when it comes to emergencies and extreme events we are all in it together.

Before the heatwave

Check weather forecasts and heat warnings regularly.



Plan how you and your family will stay cool at home, work and school.



Identify nearby cool spaces such as malls, libraries, community centres, cooling centres and other air-conditioned public spaces.

Check on neighbours, friends and family who may need extra support and help preparing.

During the heatwave

Stay hydrated. Drink water often. Don't wait until you are thirsty.



Stay cool. Wear light-coloured and loose-fitting clothing.



Look out for others. Check on family, friends and neighbours regularly.

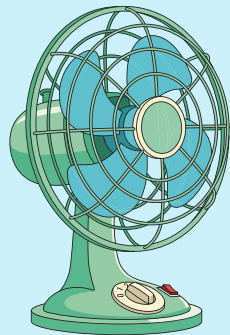


Indoors

Keep your home cool. Close curtains and blinds during the day. Use fans and air conditioning.

Take a cool shower, bath or use cool, wet towels to cool off.

Identify your home's cooler spots (usually on lower floors) and prepare them for sleeping.



Outdoors

If you can, limit outdoor activities to cooler times of the day, like early morning or late evening. Avoid strenuous activity.

Stay in the shade and use sun protection.

Never leave people or pets in parked vehicles. The inside temperature can rise to dangerous levels quickly.

Heat-related illnesses

Extreme heat can also pose health risks, especially in some more vulnerable groups like children, older adults and those with chronic illnesses.



Heat exhaustion

Your body can overheat from high temperatures, especially if the humidity is high, you are involved in physical activity or you are dehydrated. Early heat exhaustion signs can include:

- headache or fatigue
- nausea or vomiting
- dizziness, feeling lightheaded or fainting
- extreme thirst, dry or sticky mouth

What to do:

Move to a cool place, rest and rehydrate. If you don't feel better soon, consult a health care provider or call Health811 at 811 (TTY: 711)

Heat stroke

Heat stroke is a potentially fatal medical emergency. Symptoms can include:

- high body temperature
- dizziness or fainting
- very hot or red skin without sweating
- confusion, slurred speech and lack of coordination

What to do:

Seek medical help or call 911 immediately. While waiting for help, cool the person by moving them to a cool place if possible, removing extra clothing and shoes, fanning them and applying cold water to their skin or clothing or ice packs around their body.

Stay informed

Follow us for more emergency preparedness tips and information:



Get weather updates and heat warnings:
weather.gc.ca

Find cooling centres in your community:
ontario.ca/Municipalities



Be prepared for extreme heat

Emergencies can happen suddenly. Consider putting together an emergency plan and preparedness kit with the items you and your household need to be safe and take care of yourselves for at least three days following an emergency.

Your emergency preparedness kit should include:

- non-perishable food and a can opener
- bottled or bagged water (4 litres per person/day)
- medications
- toilet paper and other personal items
- back up chargers and power banks
- cash in small bills
- flashlight, headlamp or glow stick
- radio (crank or battery-run)
- extra batteries
- first-aid kit
- candles and matches/lighter
- hand sanitizer or moist towelettes
- important papers and identification
- extra car and house keys
- whistle
- zip-lock and garbage bags
- duct tape
- baby and pet supplies

During a heat event, consider reinforcing your emergency preparedness kit with items to help keep your family cool, hydrated and protected from the sun:

- extra drinking water
- sunglasses with full UVA and UVB
- sunscreen with 30 SPF or higher
- wide-brimmed sun hats
- spray bottle misters



Stock up on electrolyte-containing foods, like bananas (potassium), pumpkin seeds (magnesium), pretzels or crackers (sodium).



You can make your own electrolyte drink by mixing 1 litre of water or juice with 6 tsp. of sugar and ½ tsp. of salt.



Pack your kit in an easy-to-carry bag or a case on wheels.

Store your kit in a place that is easy to reach quickly.

You can build your kit over time, adding items every time you go to the store.

Connect with your community to see how you can support each other. Your municipality or local government may also have supplies available.

For more information on putting together an emergency preparedness kit or how to make an emergency plan, go to: ontario.ca/BePrepared