

Regional Heatwave Resilience Project

Building community preparedness



NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

TARGET AUDIENCE - ALL OF COMMUNITY

Stage 1 Messages: General Community Awareness

These messages seek to raise general community awareness of heatwave / extreme heat impacts and preparedness and would be issued periodically during the lead up to and during summer.

Beat the Heat this Summer!

Many of us simply don't realise that extreme heat is a major cause of health problems every year in Australia, with heatwaves causing more hospitalisations and deaths than any other natural disaster.

In addition to heat stress, heat exhaustion and heat stroke, heatwaves can seriously worsen existing health conditions including cardiac disease, mental health and behavioural disorders, asthma and obstructive lung conditions.

This summer, it is time we all started to take heat related illness seriously.

Four simple actions we can all take to protect ourselves against heat related illness are:

- **Drink plenty of water** and avoid alcoholic, hot or sugary drinks
- **Keep Cool** – do less and avoid being outside during the hottest part of the day
- **Check on** elderly friends, neighbours and relatives, especially if they live alone
- **Have a Plan** for how to stay cool when it heats up

To make your home more comfortable during hot weather keep windows, blinds and curtains closed during the heat of the day to keep the heat out. If you have an air conditioner, reduce running costs by setting it to 24 degrees, and turn it on before the room heats up so it doesn't have to work as hard.

If it gets too hot at home have a plan of where else you might go to stay cool and how to get there safely. Swimming pools, community centres, public libraries and galleries are great low-cost places to beat the heat during the hottest part of the day, as are shopping centres, cinemas and restaurants.

[Freely accessed public facilities registered as 'Cool Spots' in the (INSERT COUNCIL AREA NAME) include (INSERT FACILITY NAMES) and will be open as normal (INSERT OPERATING HOURS)]



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it is also very important to know the **early** signs of heat related illness:

- tiredness
- thirst
- bright or dark yellow urine
- dizziness or fainting.

If you or others experience any of these symptoms take steps to prevent it reaching dangerous levels. Move somewhere cool, drink water or diluted fruit juice (1 part juice in 4 parts water) and avoid tea, coffee or alcohol. If symptoms worsen, seek medical advice.

To find out more about ways to beat the heat and be prepared during a heatwave visit www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/beattheheat



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Regional Environmental
Management Strategy



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