



# COUNTY OF ORANGE HEALTH CARE AGENCY

David L. Riley  
DIRECTOR

## PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

MAILING ADDRESS:  
405 W. 5<sup>th</sup> STREET, ROOM 709  
SANTA ANA, CA 92701

TELEPHONE: (714) 834-3155  
FAX: (714) 834-5506

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**Contact:** Tricia Landquist  
(714) 834-2178

### **High Temperatures Bring Risk of Heat-Related Illnesses**

**(Santa Ana)** – The National Weather Service is predicting near record high temperatures for some areas of Orange County over the next several days and area residents are urged to take precautions to prevent heat related illnesses.

“The current forecast calls for hotter than average high temperatures extending through the weekend,” said Dr. Eric Handler, County Health Officer. “Everyone should take precautions to stay cool and drink plenty of water and other non-alcoholic fluids to prevent serious heat related illnesses. Be sure to call and check on your family members and neighbors. Additional precautions are especially needed for older adults, those with preexisting medical conditions like heart or lung disease, those with disabilities, children, and those who may be working outdoors. Remember that your pets need extra water and shade, too.”

Prolonged exposure to excessive temperatures may cause serious conditions like heat exhaustion or heat stroke and can even be fatal. Symptoms of heat exhaustion may include heavy sweating, muscle cramps, weakness, headache, nausea or vomiting and dizziness. Warning signs of heat stroke may include an extremely high body temperature, unconsciousness, confusion, hot and dry skin (no sweating), a rapid, strong pulse, and a throbbing headache. If symptoms of heat stroke occur, immediately call for medical assistance. Move the person to a shady area and begin cooling their body with water.

Recommended precautions to prevent heat related illnesses include:

- **Staying cool indoors.** Use your air conditioner to cool your home. If you don't have air conditioning, visit public facilities such as shopping malls, community centers or libraries to stay cool. Do not rely on electric fans as your primary cooling device during a heat wave. When the temperature is in the high 90's or higher, a fan will not prevent heat-related illness. A cool shower or bath is a more effective way to cool off.
- **Drinking more fluids, especially water.** Don't wait until you are thirsty.
- **Checking often on those at high-risk.** This includes older adults, those with chronic medical conditions, people with disabilities, those who take certain medications and children. Make sure their air conditioner is turned on, or offer to take them to a cooler place.

-More-

**Health Care Agency Press Release**

**8/26/2009**

**Page 2 of 2**

If you have to be outside in the heat, follow these recommendations:

- Wear light, loose-fitting clothing and a hat to provide shade from the sun. Use sunscreen.
- Avoid over-exertion and schedule outdoor activities for the cooler part of the day. Spend as much time as possible in the shade.
- Never leave a person or pet unattended in a closed car or other vehicle.

For more information on heat related illnesses, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).