

# HOW TO STAY COOL DURING EXTREME HEAT



Extreme heat is a prolonged period of very hot weather, which may include high humidity. In Massachusetts, a “heat wave” is defined as a period of three or more consecutive days above 90°F or 32.2°C. When a heat emergency is underway in the City of Cambridge, the following information can help you stay safe during extreme conditions.



## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS?

Hot weather and extreme heat can cause life-threatening illness. Symptoms can include: headaches, dizziness, nausea, confusion, cramps, high body temperature, a fast pulse, heavy sweating, cool and clammy skin, dizziness, nausea, or muscle aches. If you experience these symptoms, seek medical help, move to a cooler place and follow CDC recommendations.

## WHO IS AT RISK FOR HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES?

While everyone is at risk for heat-related illness, the following populations are at greater danger:

- Persons 65 and older, under two, pregnant, or suffering medical conditions.
- People who work outside or spend a lot of time outdoors, such as athletes.
- Socially isolated persons, including those experiencing homelessness and the elderly.
- People taking certain medications.
- Those who are overweight and obese.

## HOW DO I STAY COOL DURING EXTREME HEAT?

Whether you're indoors or outside, it's important to keep cool with the following suggestions:

- Limit outdoor activities to mornings and evenings, when it is cooler.
- Wear sunscreen, loose-fitting and light-colored clothing, hats and sunglasses.
- Dip a washcloth in cold water, wring it out and place it around your neck.
- Use the city waterplay map or state pool directory to find a nearby water park or pool.
- Keep cool with air conditioning, shade, showers, and ventilation.
- Close windows and blinds during the day.

### WORRIED ABOUT THE COST OF RUNNING YOUR A/C?

Ask about discounted rates from Eversource or contact the Utility Bill Help Line at **617-430-6230** or [cambridgehelp@allinenergy.org](mailto:cambridgehelp@allinenergy.org)

## HOW DO I STAY HYDRATED DURING HEAT WAVES?

The following tips can help you stay hydrated and avoid heat-related illness:

- Drink two to four glasses of cool fluids every hour, even if you don't feel thirsty.
- Avoid alcoholic drinks or too much caffeine and sugar.
- Take water with you and use water fountains or refill stations at city parks.

## WHAT IF THERE IS A POWER OUTAGE?

To stay informed, monitor the weather by watching local news or visiting National Weather Service–Boston. Keep devices charged and batteries, flashlights, and nonperishables handy.

If you depend on electric life-support devices:

- Talk to your health care provider about how to use them during a power outage.
- Ask your local electric company about their "priority reconnection service" list.
- Let the fire department know that you are dependent on life-support devices.
- If your medication requires refrigeration, ask your pharmacist about outage storage.

## HOW CAN I PROTECT FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND NEIGHBORS?

- Be a good neighbor. Check on the elderly, people who live alone or have medical conditions, those who may need assistance, or individuals who don't have A/C.
- Never leave children or pets in a car unattended. Interior temperatures can rise almost 20°F within 10 minutes, even with the windows cracked open.
- Call 911 if you see someone with signs of heat stroke or in need of medical aid.
- Move the person to a cool area, offer wet towels, and DO NOT give them fluids.



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

When a heat emergency is declared, the City of Cambridge will provide more information and resources on our website at [www.cambridgema.gov/heat](http://www.cambridgema.gov/heat)

## MULTILINGUAL RESOURCES



বাংলা



हिन्दी



عربي



中文



ESPAÑOL



PORTUGUÊS



KREYÒL  
AYISYEN



ENGLISH