
MEDIA BULLETIN

For Immediate Release
June 24, 2021

Preparing for summer weather

Environment and Climate Change Canada has issued special weather statements for several parts of the [province](#). Current forecasts for much of the north call for daytime highs rising into the low to mid 30's with overnight lows down to the mid-teens. This is not a heat warning or an extreme heat emergency, but we will experience the first high temperatures of the summer. The warmer weather will also cause rapid snow melt, leading to high rivers and streams throughout the province so please keep water safety in mind this weekend.

The first high temperatures of the season can lead to some people overheating because they are not yet acclimatized to warmer weather. There are some basic steps you can take to ensure you and your family remain safe and healthy during warmer temperatures.

Preparing for hot weather:

- If you do not have air conditioning at home, find an air-conditioned spot close by where you can cool off on hot days. Consider places in your community to spend time such as movie theatres, libraries, community centres, or shopping malls.
- Check that you have a working fan. If you have an air conditioner, make sure it works.
- Shut windows and close curtains or blinds during the heat of the day to block the sun and to prevent hotter outdoor air from coming inside. Open doors and windows when it is cooler outside to move that cooler air indoors.

The BC Centre of Disease Control (BCCDC) also has a broad range of heat-related information on its [website](#), including information on the different types of heat alerts, how to prepare for warmer temperatures, symptoms of heat-related illnesses, those most at risk during warmer weather, and ways to stay cool.

Who is most at risk?

It is important to monitor yourself and family members, and to consider developing a check-in system for neighbours and friends who are at higher-risk during warmer weather

The most susceptible individuals include:

- Older adults, especially those over 60
- people who live alone
- people with pre-existing health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease or respiratory disease
- people with mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, depression, or anxiety
- people with substance use disorders
- people with limited mobility
- people who are marginally housed

- people who work in hot environments
- people who are pregnant
- infants and young children

Your health:

- Spray your body down with water, wear a damp shirt, take a cool shower or bath, or sit with part of your body in water to cool down if you are feeling too hot.
- Drink plenty of water and other liquids to stay hydrated, even if you are not feeling thirsty
- Take it easy, especially during the hottest hours of the day.
- Stay in the shade or use a broad spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30 or more.
- Signs of overheating include feeling unwell, headache, and dizziness. Take immediate action to cool down if you are overheating.
- It is important to remember that overheating can lead to heat exhaustion and heat stroke.
- Signs of heat exhaustion include heavy sweating, severe headache, muscle cramps, extreme thirst, and dark urine. If you are experiencing these symptoms, seek a cooler environment, drink plenty of water, rest, and use water to cool your body.
- Heat stroke is a medical emergency

In the event of a medical emergency, British Columbians are advised to call 9-1-1 or their local emergency services number. However, it is also important to use these systems responsibly to avoid overwhelming the system.

Ahead of the busy summer months, BC Emergency Health Services in partnership with ECOMM, is reminding British Columbians to only dial 9-1-1 for serious or life-threatening injuries.

When to call 9-1-1:

- In general: when there is chest pain, difficulty breathing, loss of consciousness, severe burns, choking, convulsions that are not stopping, a drowning, a severe allergic reaction, a head injury, signs of a stroke, a major trauma.
- More specifically related to hot weather: severe headache, confusion, unsteadiness, loss of thirst, nausea/vomiting, and dark urine or no urine are signs of dangerous heat-related illness.

If you have a less urgent health issue:

- You can call 8-1-1 and get connected with a nurse at HealthLinkBC. Or, if you can do it safely, you could go to an urgent care centre or clinic.
- That way, our highly trained emergency medical dispatch staff and paramedics will be available for people who need their services the most.
- There are also online tools at healthlinkbc.ca including a “Check Your Symptoms” tool.

While this bulletin is about the beginning of hot summer weather, additional information on preparing for extreme heat events can also be found in BC's [Extreme Heat Preparedness Guide](#).

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