



PREPARING FOR EXTREME HEAT EVENTS

Low-Cost Solutions for Renters

EXTREME HEAT IS A “SILENT KILLER” – BUT DEATH IS PREVENTABLE

Extreme heat is a serious and growing problem for British Columbians. The heat dome in 2021 was an extreme heat wave that claimed more than 700 lives across B.C. as the temperatures surpassed 40 C for several days in a row. **Summers in the future may see the return of these hot and dry times when temperatures could reach between 30 and 35 degrees Celsius.**

Heat-related deaths and illnesses are preventable by preparing for them. **Everyone can take steps to reduce their risks from extreme heat and embrace opportunities to help others more vulnerable than themselves.**

PREPARING FOR EXTREME HEAT EVENTS



Make a plan with neighbours, friends, and family



Stock up on **food, medicines**, and fill up your freezer with **water** so you do not have to go out in the heat.



If you are taking medication or have a health condition, ask your doctor or pharmacist if it increases your health risk in the heat and follow their recommendation.

See pages 2 and 3 for tips on staying cool at home



Watch for information updates

Download the “WeatherCAN” app from Google Play/Apple’s App Store.

BC Emergency alert system will send an alert to your phone.



Learn the signs of heat-related illness

It is not safe to stay at home if indoor temperatures are above 31 C.

Consider going somewhere cooler, such as a shopping mall.

Act right away if you notice someone with symptoms of heat-related illness (listed on page 4).



HOW TO KEEP COOL AT HOME WITHOUT AIR CONDITIONING

NO COST



Reduce Indoor Heat during the day

Close window(s) and curtains or blinds to shut out the sun and heat. If you are in a poorly insulated house, closing windows could make it hotter. If you need to open a window, try placing a fan blowing outside to allow warm air out of your house instead of drawing hot air in.



Cool house at night

Open window(s) at night to allow cool air inside.
Put a fan by the window facing in to blow air into the house when the temperature is cooler outside.
Use fans (including kitchen & exhaust fans) to circulate cool air.



Use your fans wisely

Set your ceiling fans to rotate counterclockwise and place a bowl/tray of ice in front of a fan.
Do not use a fan when the indoor air temperature is over 35°C (95°F). Using a fan can be more harmful than helpful when indoor air temperatures are hotter than your body temperature.



Check with your neighbours, family, friends and those at risk

If you live alone, find a heat-buddy to check in on you and take you to cooling centres or help you with cooling measures at your residence.
Check in on your heat-buddy and neighbours multiple times a day, especially homebound individuals or people who live alone.



Minimize indoor heat production

Turn off unused appliances.
Cook food in a microwave rather than oven.
Dry clothes on a patio or a small drying rack inside.



Cool your body

Wear cool, loose clothing.
Use water-soaked cloths or cooling packs on your neck and wrists.
Sit in or put legs in a cool (not cold) bath.
Take a cool shower to draw heat from your body.
Plan for modified working, living, and sleeping arrangements.



LOW COST



Stay Hydrated

Drink water/cool liquids.

Drink before you feel thirsty. Thirst is not the only indicator of dehydration.

Avoid or limit alcohol and caffeine as they can lead to dehydration.



Have Light Meals

Have cold meals and drinks.

Avoid using the oven, and avoid heavy meals and protein that takes more energy to breakdown.



Try Simple DIY'S

Fill a small plastic spray bottle with cold water to create your own mister. Fill a bucket/basin with cold water and dip your feet in to help cool your body temperature.

Spray bottles, buckets, and basins can all be purchased at a dollar store.



Get two fans to create cross ventilation

Open a window on one side of the room and place a box fan in it, facing out. On the room's opposite end, open a window and install the second fan in it, facing in. One fan actively pulls in fresh air while the other fan draws out the stale, warm air already in the room.

MEDIUM COST



Add temperature shading structures

Sun-blocking curtains, blinds, awnings, and light-coloured furniture/walls reduce the sun's effect on interior temperatures and the amount of energy required to cool a room. They also help lower monthly electricity bills.

HEAT RELATED ILLNESS

HEAT EXHAUSTION

SIGNS

- Cold, pale, and clammy skin
- Heavy Sweating
- Fast, weak pulse
- Muscle cramps
- Headache, dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Tiredness or weakness
- Fainting

WHAT TO DO

- Move to a cool place
- Loosen tight clothes
- Put cool, wet cloths on the person's body
- Take a cool bath
- Sip water

Get medical help if:

- The person is throwing up
- Symptoms get worse
- Symptoms last longer than 1 hour



HEAT STROKE

Heat stroke is a life threatening medical emergency

SIGNS

- High body temperature (103°F or higher), hot, red, or dry skin
- Absence of sweat
- Fast, strong pulse
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Confusion
- Losing consciousness (passing out)

WHAT TO DO

- Call 911 immediately**
- Move the person to a cooler place
- Help lower the person's temperature with cool cloths or a cool bath
- DO NOT give the person anything to drink**

RESOURCES

For additional resources, please visit www.preparedbc.ca, where you can learn about how to prepare for, respond to and recover from the top hazards in BC, such as wildfires, floods, and earthquakes.



In an emergency, call 9-1-1

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