

Extreme Heat Building Checklist

Resource for Building Operators

Use this checklist before and during an Extreme Heat Warning to minimize heat in a building

1. Before Summer: Plan for Cooling

- ✓ **Identify and / or Create Cooling Assets:**
 - **If air conditioning exists in the building:** ensure it is ready to be turned on
 - **If the building doesn't have sufficient cooling:** consider adding portable air conditioning unit to common rooms or individual units, where appropriate
 - **If the building does not have a common room:** identify cooled spaces that your tenants can use in an emergency: a cooling center, public library, or a shopping mall
- ✓ **Considerations for creating a cooling room:**
 - **Cooling can be provided:** through an existing central system or installation of portable air conditioning (a/c) unit
 - **If you need to purchase an ac unit:** see other guidance documents¹
 - **If there are operable windows:** they can be used to bring in cooler air at night and should be closed and covered when the temperature outside is higher than the temperature inside, i.e., this may be during the day
 - **Providing:**
 - **water** spray bottles or similar misting cooling items
 - **outlets** for charging phones and medical equipment
 - **bathroom** access
 - **access** to refreshing food & water
 - **space for pets:** some tenants may not leave pets behind by themselves
- ✓ **If no cooling room is available:** what indoor or outdoor areas might be used?
 - **Community Assets:** these include spaces that may provide cooling such as:
 - Libraries
 - Malls
 - Community Centres, etc.
 - Green Spaces, Parks or Shaded Areas outside
 - Waterparks &/or Pools or Misting Stations
 - **Passive Measures:** include items that can be included in a retrofit, where possible. The below may provide cooling:
 - External window shading devices
 - Trees &/or vegetation can provide shade, if they're not a fire hazard, and if they are out of range of Wildland Urban Interface²
 - Window film if and where appropriate (check with Capital Planning)
 - High albedo envelope materials
 - Operable windows
 - High-performance windows

¹ Please find more resources including the *Air Conditioner Sizing Worksheet* and the *Guidance for Cleaner Air Space During Wildfire Smoke Events* as well as *Heat Event Response Planning* at: <https://www.bchousing.org/projects-partners/extreme-heat/resources-webinars>

² Please review whether your building is close to the WUI: <https://firesmartcanada.ca/about-firesmart/#WUI>

Extreme Heat Building Checklist

Resource for Building Operators

Continued ...

2. During Summer &/or Heat Event: Reduce Heat

- ✓ **Is Heat Off?** Check hallways, common areas & units, if possible, etc.
 - Is the building heat turned off? If not, are there other solutions for those needing heat?
 - If it is on, and you are unable to turn it off, please call your maintenance provider
- ✓ **Is there AC in the building?**
 - **If Yes:** Use air conditioning in the below area if possible:
 - Individual residential unit, including portable AC or installed in units
 - Hallways
 - Common areas
 - **If No AC:**
 - **Health Note:** Above 31° fans can cause harm, as they do not lower room or body temperature; evidence shows using fans is not very effective and may make heat illness worse
 - **Relocate Above 31°:** Health officials recommend monitoring temperature in the home and leaving if it gets above 31 degrees for a long period of time
 - **Can you open windows to reduce heat?** Windows may be opened in hallways & communal spaces, if safe, to create a cross breeze at night &/or when cooler outside, such as during the early morning if there is cool wind outside
 - **If hotter outside:** keep these windows closed
 - **Are there fans that are effective against the heat?**
 - Only use fans if they can bring cool air into the space. Be aware that fans should not be used in extreme heat after 31 °C
 - **Are vulnerable tenants identified?** Are staff aware of those with mobility challenges and other at-risk individuals that may or may not be able to leave overheated living units?
 - **If YES:** Is a safety plan in place, including access to cooling and refuge for all tenants?
 - **If NO:** What measures can be taken to find out which tenants may be at risk?