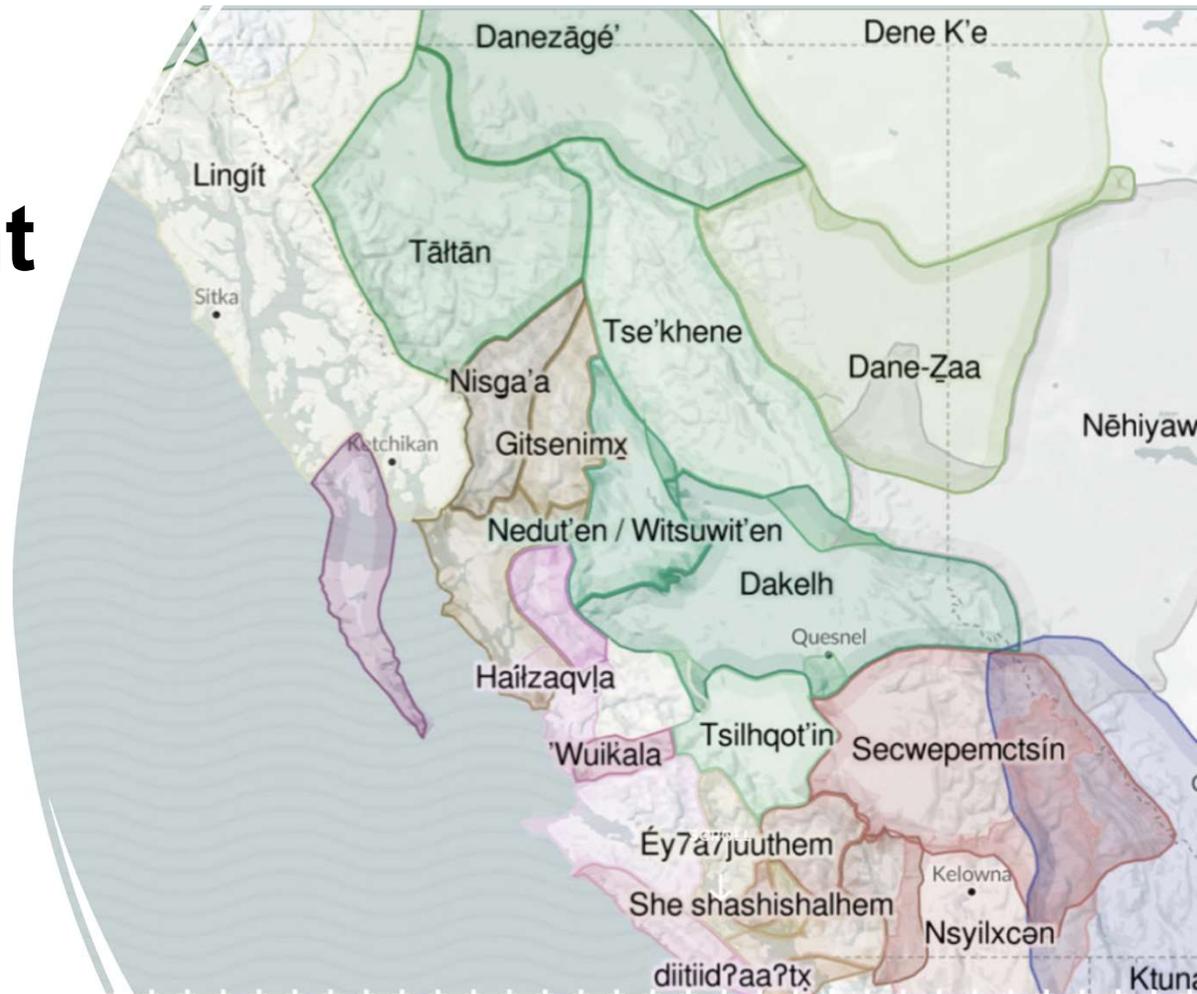




# Keeping People Safe: Heat Response for Unsheltered Individuals

July 16, 2024

# Territory Acknowledgement



# Housekeeping

THIS SESSION  
IS BEING  
RECORDED



## Please keep muted

Until the moderator calls on you



## Ask questions

Using Chat or Raise Hand functions



## Follow up

- A recording will be posted to the [bchousing.org](http://bchousing.org) website
- Email [extremeheat@bchousing.org](mailto:extremeheat@bchousing.org) with any follow-up questions or comment

# Agenda

## Topic

Introductions

BC Housing Practice & Process

Fraser Health & Vancouver Coastal Health – Public Health Guidance

EMCR Process & Guidelines

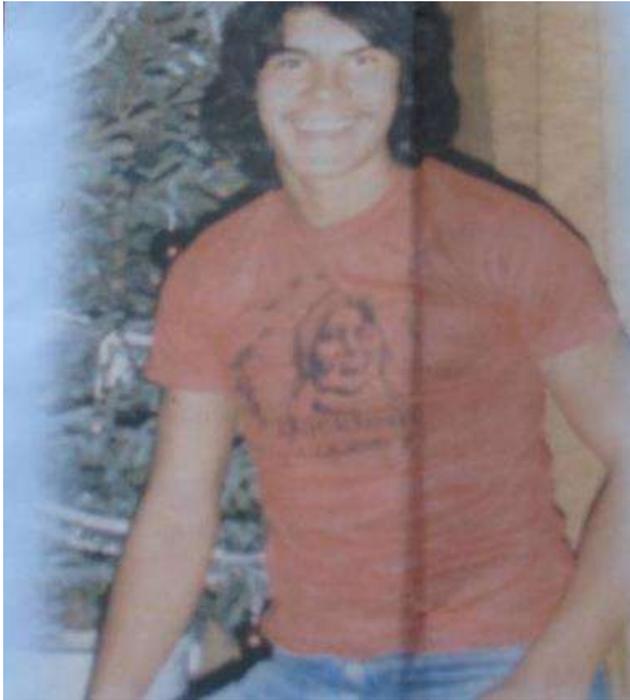
Q&A

Invitation to provide feedback from recent heat wave

Closing

# Focus of Today





**Curtis Brick**



**Curtis Brick dies from heat exposure in Grandview Park on July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

## BC Housing Practices & Process

Supporting our Non-Profit housing and service providers through:



Supplies



- (Connect with your BCH Contact)  
– Cooling kits, Pop-Up Tents



Information



- Website, Posters, Materials

# What Kinds of Supplies can BC Housing Support Funding?

- Air Conditioners (different types to support small and large spaces)
- Fans (different types to support small and large spaces)
- Air Purifiers
- Tents
- Water
- Misters
- Cooling Kit Supplies (tote, cooling towel, ice pack, water bottle, spray bottle thermometer)
- Sunscreen (for outreach/homeless)
- N95/ K95 masks

# What Information is Available for You?

[bchousing.org/projects-partners/extreme-heat](http://bchousing.org/projects-partners/extreme-heat)

## Extreme Heat and Wildfire Smoke

Share

Information icon: Tenants can make use of [dedicated extreme heat information](#) to keep safe during hot weather.  
If you are a non-profit housing provider in B.C. in need of extreme heat and wildfire smoke related equipment, see [sourcing equipment](#).

### Quick Links

- [Public Weather Alerts for BC](#)
- [HealthLinkBC - Beat the Heat](#)
- [BC CDC Wildfire Smoke](#)
- [PreparedBC - Extreme Heat](#)
- [PreparedBC - Extreme Heat Guide](#)

### Useful Documents

- [Tips to Beat the Heat - Poster](#)
- [Tenant Extreme Heat Check-In Card](#)



### Health Impacts

Everyone is at risk of heat and wildfire smoke illnesses in the summer, and social housing tenants are at increased risk because they often have fewer resources.

### Prepare a EHWS Response Plan

A guide to help non-profit housing providers develop an Extreme Heat and Wildfire Smoke Response Plan for their organization.

### Planning and Communicating with Tenants

Building managers and housing providers should communicate with tenants and building staff about the risks of extreme heat and poor air quality, the signs and symptoms of related illnesses, and how to stay safe.

### How to Cool a Space

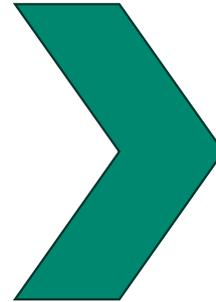
There are different actions building operators, staff and tenants can take to cool a space.

### Resources and Webinars

The following resources and webinars will help you stay informed and prepared during extreme heat and wildfire smoke in BC.

### Extreme Heat Information for Tenants

Find information on cooling centres, tips to beat the heat, and when to seek help.



## Tips to Beat The Heat

- Cool Your Body**
  - Wet clothing to help bring down body temperature
  - Use water-soaked cloths or cooling packs on neck/wrists
  - Sit in or put legs in cool (not cold) bath
- Hydrate**
  - Drink water/cool liquids
  - Eat fresh fruit & salads
  - Drink before you feel thirsty. Thirst is not the only indicator of dehydration
- Reduce Indoor Heat**
  - Daytime: cool living and working areas by closing windows, and use window coverings, air conditioners and misters
  - Nighttime: keep windows open, with a fan near window to bring in cool air
- Protect Your Pets**
  - Provide shade & cool drinking water & baths
  - Never leave pets unattended in cars or direct sunlight
  - Plan outdoor activities during cooler parts of day. Asphalt might be too hot for bare paws
- Avoid Sun Exposure**
  - Wear wide-brimmed, breathable hat or use umbrella
  - Avoid / limit strenuous activities during hottest part of the day
  - Find shade if you need to be outside
  - Use sunscreen
- Ask Your Doctor**
  - If taking medications, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist if you need to be extra careful
  - Some medical conditions may increase vulnerability during hot weather
- Check on Others**
  - Visit or call family & neighbours when you can
- Avoid/Limit Alcohol & Caffeine**
  - These can lead to dehydration

Extreme heat can be dangerous.  
[www.healthlinkbc.ca/more/health-features/beat-heat](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/more/health-features/beat-heat)  
[www.bchousing.org/projects-partners/extreme-heat](http://www.bchousing.org/projects-partners/extreme-heat)

# Cool Kit Suggestions



Thermometer



Gel Compress



Small Tote



Water Bottle



Towel



Spray Bottle

# How Can Non-Profits be Prepared



Check your Extreme Heat and Wildfire Smoke inventory



Identify inventory items that need to be restocked – if you need additional funding contact your Portfolio Manager (NPPM/SHA)



Proceed to purchase Extreme Heat and Wildfire Smoke supplies (Do No Wait!)



Monitor Heat Alert updates from Environment and Climate Change Canada and our Partner Bulletin



When a Heat Alert is announced – If your region is facing supply shortages contact [extremeheat@bchousing.org](mailto:extremeheat@bchousing.org)

# Heat & Smoke Readiness

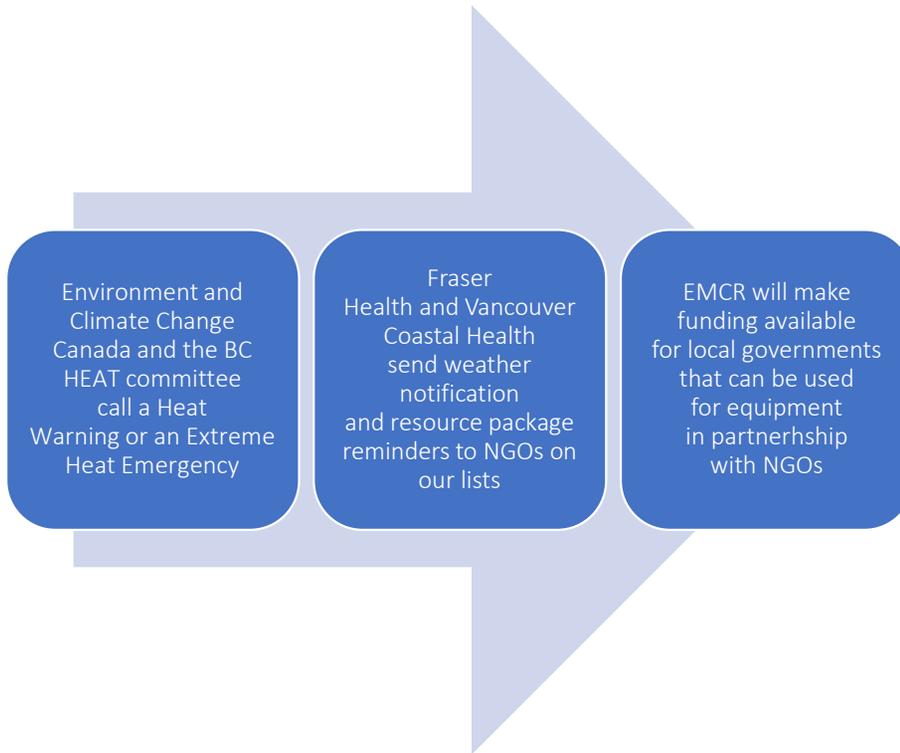
May 28th, 2024

Healthy Environments & Climate Change

# Overview

- What happens during a heat event
- Who is most susceptible and resources available

# During a heat event



Who is at most risk and what resources are available?

# Heat Susceptibility – Age & Medical Conditions



Seniors



People who use substances

## People with chronic illness

- Cardiovascular or respiratory disease
- Certain medications
- Confined to bed
- Sensory or communication impairment



Outdoor workers



Mental illness, particularly schizophrenia



Infants/young children

# Seniors and People with Medical Conditions



## Summer Heat Safety for Seniors and People with Medical Conditions

### How can extreme heat affect my health?

Extreme heat can affect your health in a number of ways. It can cause heat-related illnesses such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke. It can worsen any existing health conditions. In extreme situations, it can result in permanent disability or death.

### Who is more likely to have problems and why?

The people more likely to have problems with extreme heat are:

- older adults
- people without air conditioning
- people who don't leave their home often because of mobility, social anxiety, or other challenges
- people with chronic health conditions such as kidney, heart, or lung disease

During extreme heat, our bodies work hard to keep us cool. This effort can put added strain on the body when a person has a medical condition, making the medical condition worse. As we get older, our bodies might not sense that we are overheating. For these reasons, we need to pay extra attention.

Some medicines can interfere with your body's natural ability to get rid of heat, increasing the chances of overheating and dehydration. The sun and heat has a stronger effect on your body if you take any of these types of medicines:

- angiotensin-converting-enzyme (ACE) inhibitors
- anticholinergics for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), urinary incontinence, or overactive bladder
- beta blockers
- calcium channel blockers
- diuretics
- vasoconstrictors
- medicines for mental health such as antidepressants, anxiolytics, lithium, phenothiazines, antipsychotics, benzodiazepines, etc.

**If you take any of these types of medicines, ask your doctor or pharmacist** how you can prevent stronger effects during extreme heat.



Also available at  
<https://patienteduc.fraserhealth.ca/>

# People Who Use Certain Medications



Some medications impair the body's ability to cool itself.  
*For example:*

- Beta blockers (e.g. metoprolol or bisoprolol), which are medications used for certain heart conditions and for treating high blood pressure.
- Antihistamines, including over-the-counter cold or allergy medications (e.g. diphenhydramine or Benadryl®), off-the-shelf sleeping pills (e.g. Nytol®).
- Medications with anticholinergic effects, including urinary incontinence medications (e.g. oxybutynin), medications for Parkinson's disease (e.g. benztropine) and some antidepressants (e.g. amitriptyline or nortriptyline)



Some medications can dehydrate you.  
*For example:*

- Diuretics (e.g. hydrochlorothiazide or furosemide), laxatives (e.g. Senokot®) or some diabetes medications (e.g. Invokana® or Jardiance®), increase the elimination of bodily fluids through urine or stool.
- Some antidepressants (e.g. fluoxetine, lithium or venlafaxine) cause excessive sweating, which can lead to dehydration.



Some medications can increase your body temperature.  
*For example:*

- Antipsychotic medications (e.g. risperidone, olanzapine or quetiapine)
- Stimulant medications for attention disorders, such as amphetamines (e.g. Dexedrine® or Adderall®)



Some medications cause low blood pressure that heat and hot temperatures can worsen.  
*For example:*

- Medications for heart disease (e.g. nitroglycerin and calcium channel blockers)
- Medications for high blood pressure (e.g. ACE inhibitors)



The effects of some medications can be affected by dehydration.  
*For example:*

- Digoxin
- Lithium
- Warfarin
- Antiepileptics (e.g. phenytoin)

Some drugs and medications make it difficult for your body to adapt to hot temperatures

- Before the onset of warmer weather, ask your doctor, pharmacist or nurse if your medications may increase your sensitivity to heat.
- Stay in contact daily with family, neighbours or friends, during hot weather, especially if you live alone. Make sure they know you are taking a drug that makes you more sensitive to heat and let them know immediately if you are not feeling well.
- Do not stop taking any medications unless directed to do so by your doctor.



Ministry of Health

CLICK OR SCAN FOR RESOURCE

# People with Mental Health Challenges



## Supporting People Living with Schizophrenia During Extreme Heat

toward  
THE heart.com

People living with schizophrenia are more likely to experience severe illness and death during extreme heat.

### Why?

Unclear thinking	Social isolation	Substance use	Medications
They may not be able to protect themselves from extreme heat.	They may be socially isolated from friends, family, or other supports.	Using substances can increase risk of illness during extreme heat.	Medications can affect the body's response to heat.

### What can I do?

- ✓ **Do two health checks a day during extreme heat: one during the day and one in the evening**

During health checks, ask about symptoms of heat-related illness:

- Dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Headaches
- Rapid breathing/heart rate
- Very thirsty or dark urine

- ✓ **Encourage them to keep taking medication**

Call 9-1-1 if someone is in immediate distress or cannot communicate.

September 2023

For more information visit [www.towardtheheart.com](http://www.towardtheheart.com)



Also available at <https://towardtheheart.com/a-z-resource-page>

# Guidance for community organizations

## Prepare for Extreme Heat: A Guide for Service Providers

toward  
theheart.com

People who use substances are more likely to experience heat-related illness.

Substances can make it harder for the body to regulate temperature, recognize overheating, and find ways to cool down.

### Identify people who need frequent check-ins

- People who use substances
- People with mental illness
- Older people (65+)
- Pregnant people
- People with a disability
- People who do not have access to adequate housing
- People who have chronic health conditions
- People who work outside

### Gather resources

- Indoor and body temperature thermometers
- Extreme heat kits
- Taxi vouchers
- Harm reduction supplies

### Make a list of nearby community resources

- Air-conditioned public spaces
- Cooling centres
- Pools, beaches, or water parks
- Green spaces with shade, if possible

Page 1 of 2

## Prepare for Extreme Heat: A Guide for Service Providers

### Learn the signs and symptoms of heat illness

#### Heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke

- Dizzy
- Thirsty
- Very sweaty
- Nausea
- Weakness

#### Heat stroke can cause disability or death

- Confusion
- Loss of consciousness

### For both heat exhaustion and heat stroke: ACT FAST

- Move to a cooler area
- Cool body with water and ice
- Loosen clothing and remove layers



**Heat stroke is a medical emergency!  
Call 9-1-1 or seek medical attention!**

### Make an action plan

- Bookmark and follow guidance from weather alerting systems:
  - [BC Heat Alert and Response System \(BC HARS\)](#)
  - [Environment and Climate Change Canada Heat Alerts](#)
  - WeatherCAN App
- Plan to check on people two times a day **during** the heat event and for 2-3 days **after** the heat event

## Extreme heat and smoke guidance for those supporting unhoused community members (FHA)

- Identifying who is at risk
- Steps to take before a heat event
- Actions for during a heat event
- Long term cooling strategies
- How to make an outdoor cooling station
- Mental Health considerations
- Wildfire smoke considerations

Also available at

<https://towardtheheart.com/a-z-resource-page>

And [Fraserhealth.ca/heatsafety](https://fraserhealth.ca/heatsafety)

# Heat Check-ins



**Health checks during extreme heat events**  
A guide for doing in-person or remote health checks

Extreme heat events can lead to dangerous indoor temperatures in homes without functioning air conditioning. Health checks are used to assess how people at high risk of heat-related illness are doing during extreme events. In-person health checks are best, but a remote health check is better than no health check.

**Rapid risk assessment checklist**

This guide has five pages with important information for doing health checks during extreme heat events.

PAGE 1  
Rapid risk assessment checklist

To assess whether someone is at risk, check all the personal factors that apply on the following list. The more boxes checked, the higher the potential risk.

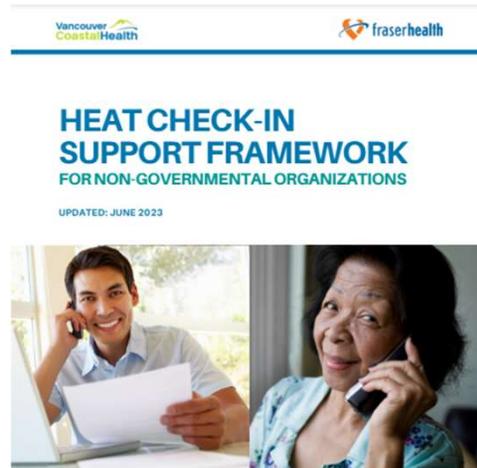
<input type="checkbox"/> Older adult (80 years+)	The body's ability to cool itself is impaired as people age.
<input type="checkbox"/> Mental illness or cognitive impairment	Conditions such as schizophrenia, depression, anxiety, and dementias can reduce awareness of heat-related risks.
<input type="checkbox"/> Chronic disease	Chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, respiratory disease, and cancer can limit the body's ability to cool.
<input type="checkbox"/> Living alone or socially isolated	People who live alone or do not have strong social connections are at higher risk because they have fewer people looking out for them.
<input type="checkbox"/> Substance dependency or use	The ability to sense and respond to heat can be affected by use of drugs or alcohol, especially for those who are dependent.
<input type="checkbox"/> Impaired or decreased mobility	People with impaired or reduced mobility might be less able to take protective measures during extreme heat events.
<input type="checkbox"/> Medication use	Some prescription medications for common conditions can cause dehydration and affect the body's ability to cool itself.
<input type="checkbox"/> Poor physical fitness	People who are not engaged in regular physical activity are less able to keep cool in the heat.



FOR MORE INFO CLICK  
OR SCAN FOR  
RESOURCE



National Collaborating Centre  
for Environmental Health  
Centre de collaboration nationale  
en santé environnementale



Vancouver Coastal Health Fraser Health

**HEAT CHECK-IN SUPPORT FRAMEWORK FOR NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

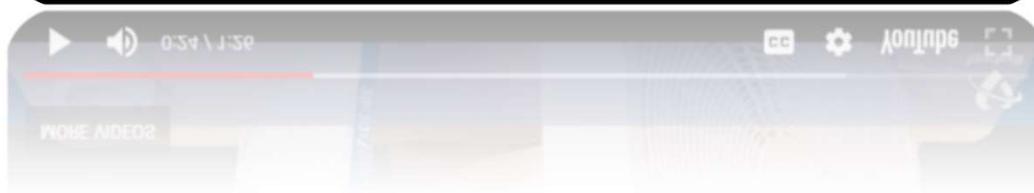
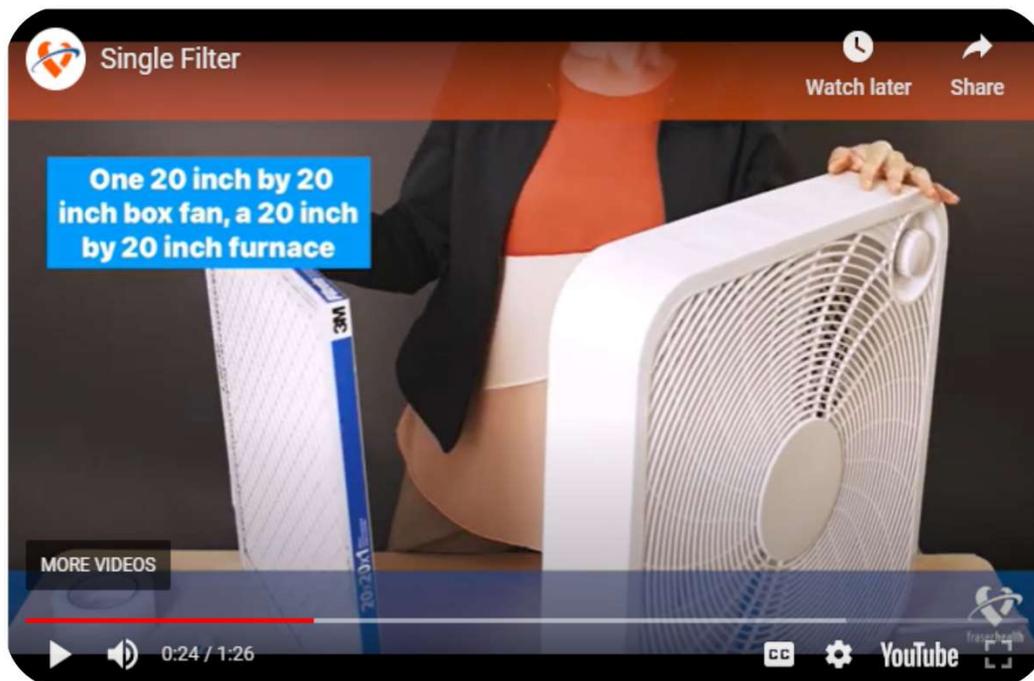
UPDATED: JUNE 2023

## Heat Check-ins (health checks):

- Rapidly access who is vulnerable
- Recognizing and responding to heat-related illness
- Can be done remote and in-person
- Encourage the use of a thermometer to help monitoring indoor temperature and body temperature

# Wildfire Smoke and Health

# Do-It-Yourself Air Cleaners



DIY air cleaners can be very effective, but there are some limitations that are important to understand

- Box fans are not designed to operate with a filter attached. Studies show that adding a filter to a newer model fan is unlikely to pose a fire risk, but caution is needed to operate DIY air cleaners safely.
- The effectiveness of DIY air cleaners depends on proper construction and operation, and quality of materials used. They may be less effective if they are incorrectly placed, not maintained, or if they are damaged.
- It may help to use low-cost particulate matter sensor to measure how the concentrations of small particles change when using air cleaners in your home. Learn more about low-cost sensors: <https://rb.gy/ja7zfn>



BEST



BETTER

# Advocacy Supporting Documents



Summer Heat and  
Health:  
Recommended Actions  
for Stratas and  
Landlords



[Guidelines for cooling  
spaces](#)

Vancouver Coastal  
Health



[Policy tools for cooler  
spaces](#)

Vancouver Coastal  
Health

## Slide 24

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L[0 0 [@Deol, Korine [FH]]  
Lubik, Amy [FH], 2024-05-02T23:30:06.864

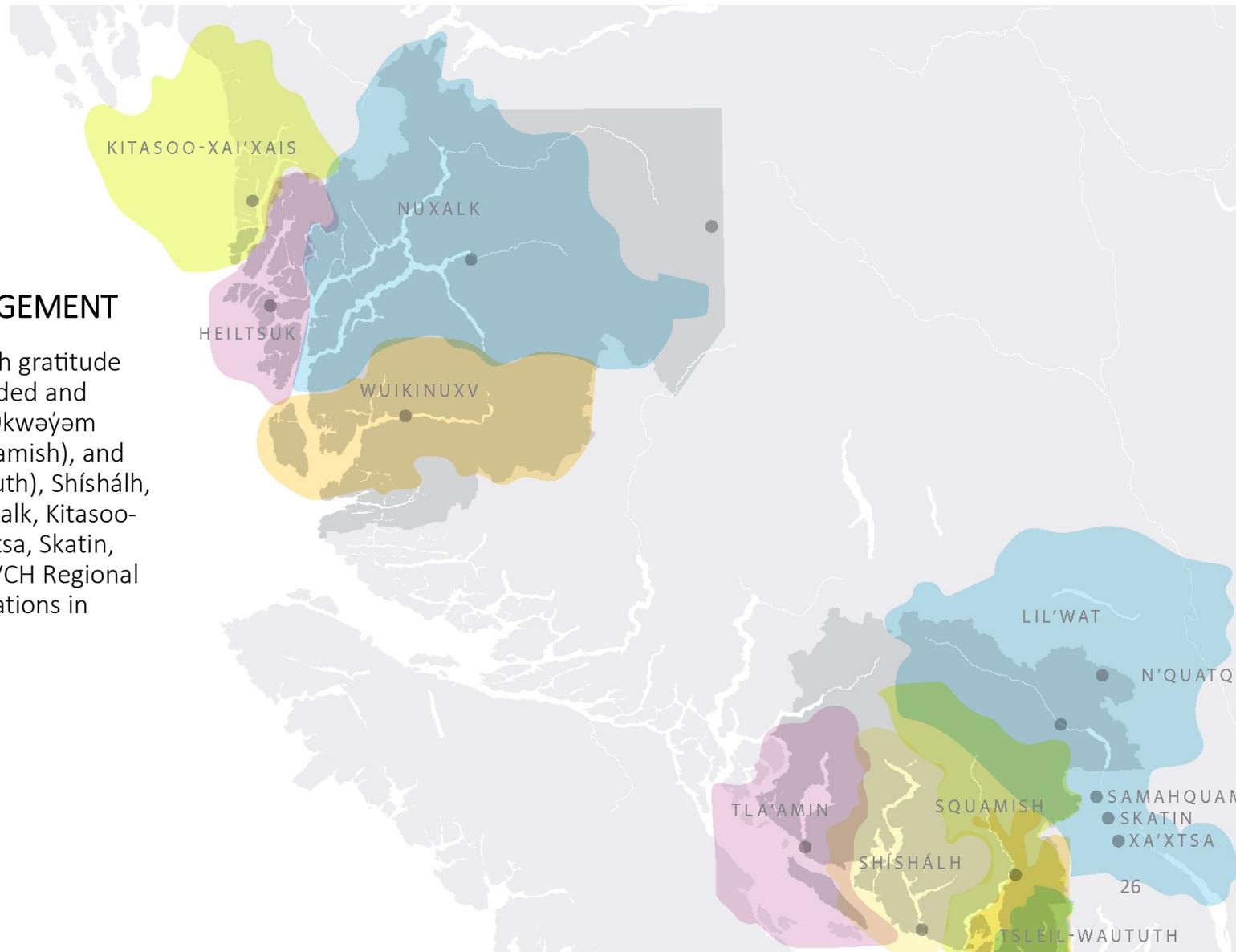
# Heat & smoke response for unhoused and underhoused populations

Misty Bath,  
Director Clinical Programs,  
Substance Use & Priority  
Populations  
July 16, 2024



## TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

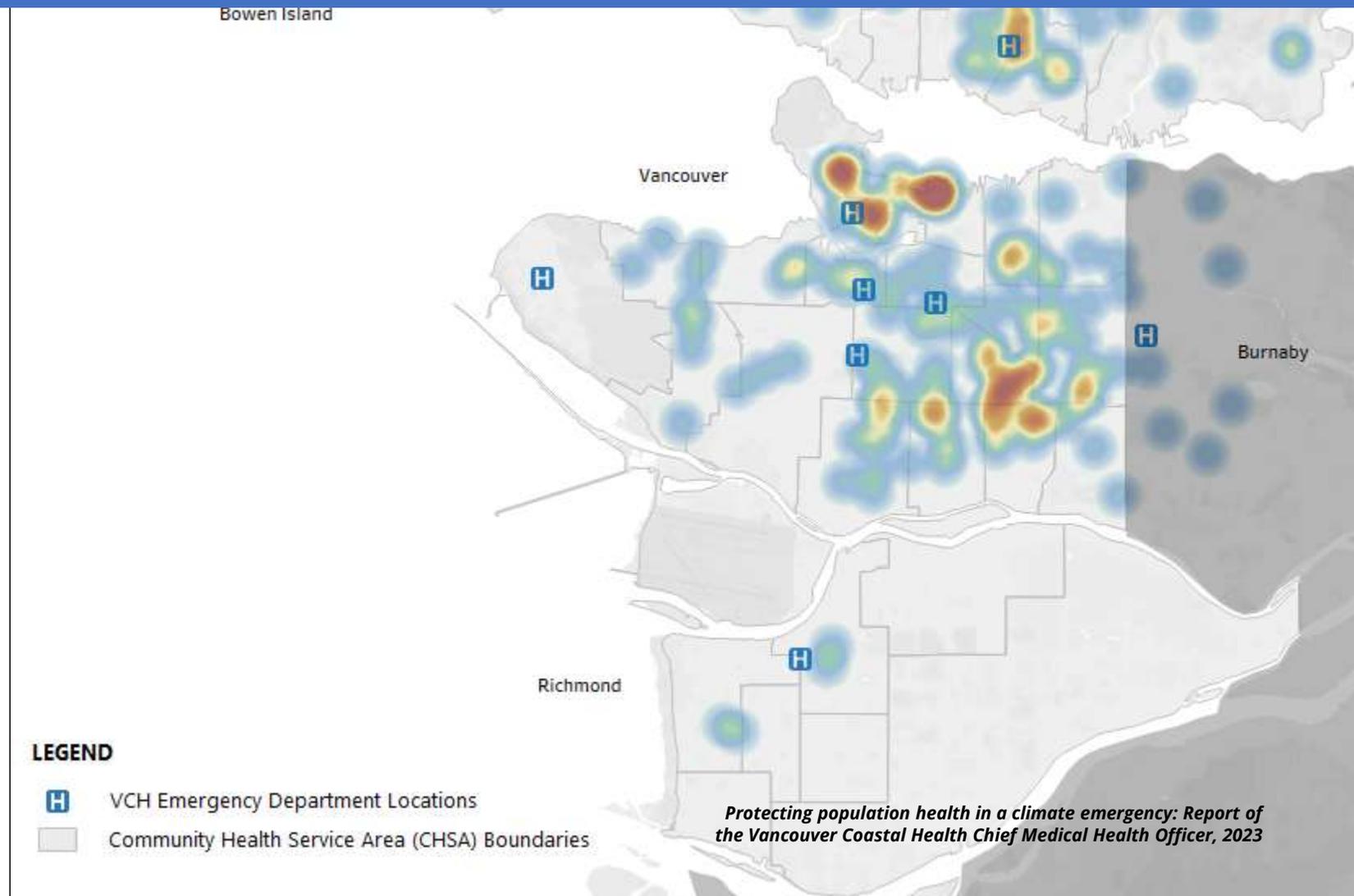
We would like to acknowledge with gratitude that we are gathering on the unceded and occupied homelands of the x<sup>w</sup>məθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh), Shíshálh, Tla'amin, Wuikinuxv, Heiltsuk, Nuxalk, Kitasoo-Xai'xais, Lil'wat, Samahquam, Xa'xtsa, Skatin, N'Quatqua Nations, and that the VCH Regional Addiction Program serves all 14 Nations in our region.



# Overview

1. Context
2. Need to know
3. Pre-season actions
4. During heat actions

# Context: ED visits by place of residence (heat dome)



# Context: 2023 CMHO report

**Figure 5. Toxic drug related mortality in the VCH region (averaged over 3 days, June 1–August 31, 2021)**



Source: BC Coroners Service: Illicit Drug Toxicity Death Data

*Sixteen people in the VCH region died due to toxic drugs in the 3 days of June 27-29, 2021, more than any other 3-day period that summer. An Extreme Heat Alert was issued from June 25–July 1, 2021.*

# Context: Only getting worse



## Extreme heat

2050s projections [SSP585]

**warmer  
temperatures**

**2.4°C**

Warmer temperatures year-round, with an average temperature increase of 2.4C



The hottest days will be hotter

**9x** as many days over 30°C

**3x** as many days over 25°C

**more frequent  
& intense heatwaves**



Heatwaves will be 4x more frequent

On average, heatwaves will last

**3-6 days**

and involve warmer day and nighttime temperatures



## Poor air quality

Climate change-related poor air quality has two main causes:

**wildfire smoke**



Longer fire seasons cause more exposure to smoke

Increasing wildfire frequency and intensity

**ground-level ozone**



The main cause of this harmful gas is vehicle exhaust

Warmer and drier summers can lead to elevated levels

---

Practical Information to know...

# Signs of heat illness

## EXTREME HEAT

Some people are impacted by the heat more than others. People over 60, people who live alone, people with certain health conditions or disabilities, people who use substances, people on certain medications, people who are pregnant, infants and young children may need extra care.



### HEAT EXHAUSTION SYMPTOMS

- Skin rash
- Heavy sweating
- Dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Rapid breathing & heartbeat
- Headache
- Difficulty concentrating
- Muscle cramps
- Extreme thirst
- Dark urine & decreased urination

Anyone with these symptoms should be moved to a cool space, given plenty of water to drink, and cooled down with water applied to the skin (see "Cool Off" section below)

### HEAT STROKE SYMPTOMS

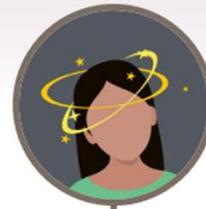
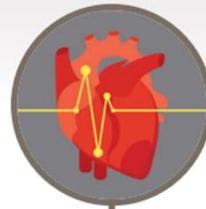
- High body temperature
- Fainting or decreased consciousness
- Confusion
- Lack of coordination
- Very hot and red skin

Seek medical attention, call 911 if necessary. Submerge some or all of the body in cool water, remove clothes and apply wet towels.

# Symptoms of wildfire smoke

## WILDFIRE SMOKE

Different people respond differently to smoke. People with chronic conditions, people who are pregnant, infants and small children, older adults and people with respiratory infections may need extra care.



### SYMPTOMS

- Sore throat
- Eye irritation
- Runny nose
- Mild cough
- Phlegm/mucous production
- Wheezy breathing
- Headaches

### MORE SEVERE SYMPTOMS

- Shortness of breath
- Severe cough
- Dizziness
- Chest pain
- Heart palpitations

Anyone with these symptoms needs medical attention

# Substance use and heat illness

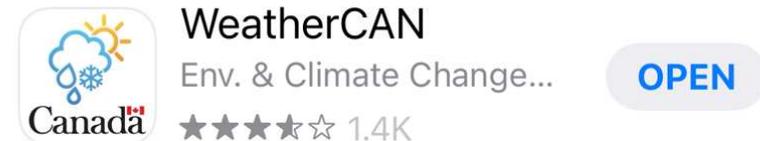
- **Opioid agonist therapy (OAT)** can cause excessive sweating. People on OAT should hydrate sufficiently.
- Using **opioids** can contribute to heat-related harms because use may impact a person's ability to seek shelter from heat, hydrate etc.
- **Opioid withdrawal** can cause runny nose and eyes, sweating, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and lead to dehydration.
- **Stimulants** increase body temperature, increase sweating and use during heat can lead to over-amping.
- **Alcohol** increases urine output and also makes it more difficult for the body to cool.
- In general, using some substances can make it more difficult for a person to know if they are thirsty or overheating.
- **Fentanyl patches** can start sliding off the body due to extreme sweating

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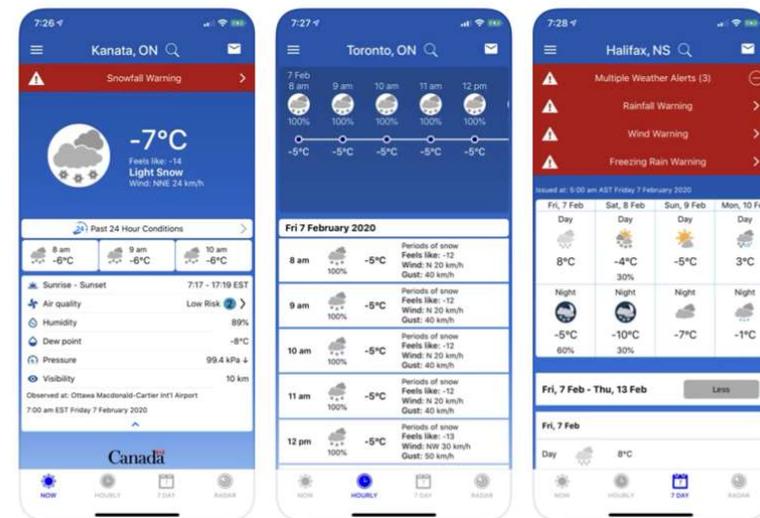
Planning activities *pre-heat*

# Stay informed

Download the Environment & Climate Change Canada (ECCC) weather app.



**WeatherCAN**  
Env. & Climate Change...  
★ ★ ★ ★ ☆ 1.4K  
[OPEN](#)



# Municipal Resources

Check in with your municipality:

- What is planned for cooling?
- What is planned for shade?
- What is planned for hydration?
- What is planned for smoke?



Stay safe in the summer heat



What you need to know

When it's summer in Vancouver and the days get hotter, take steps to protect your health. Heat, especially extreme heat, can be harmful.

- [Cooling centres](#)
- [Where to keep cool](#)
- [What we do to help you](#)
- [Heat-related illness](#)
- [Protect yourself during hot weather](#)

# Substance use and heat illness harm reduction

## Using Substances During Extreme Heat



Safer substance use during extreme heat may help prevent heat illness.

Stimulants cocaine, crack, meth	Opioids heroin, fentanyl	Alcohol liquor, beer, coolers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Increase your body temperature</li><li>Make it harder for your body to cool off</li></ul>	Make it hard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>feel the effects of heat</li><li>take action to protect yourself</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dehydrating</li><li>Large amounts can make it harder for your body to cool off</li></ul>

### Try these harm reduction tips during extreme heat

- Be aware** of how different substances affect your body during extreme heat.
- Find a friend** so you can take care of each other.
- Close window coverings** during the day and open windows at night.
- Do not stay inside if it is very hot** (above 31°C). Move to a cool, shaded area.
- Find a nearby cooling centre**, overdose prevention site, shaded park, pool, or beach to cool off.
- Carry naloxone.**
- Stagger use.** Take some time between doses.
- If you are drinking alcohol:**
  - Choose drinks with lower alcohol content (beer or coolers).
  - Mix hard liquor, like vodka or whiskey, with a hydrating fluid (Gatorade, orange juice).
  - Drink non-alcoholic fluids (water or juice) between alcohol beverages.

You may not be able to follow all of these tips. Do what you can and reach out for support.

Last updated: November 2023

For more information visit: [www.towardtheheart.com](http://www.towardtheheart.com)

## Prepare for Extreme Heat: A Guide for People Who Use Substances



An extreme heat event can be dangerous to your health.

### Substances can make you more sensitive to extreme heat.

- Stimulants** (cocaine, crack, or meth) can increase your body temperature and make it harder to cool off.
- Opioids** (heroin, fentanyl) can make it hard to feel hot and take action to protect yourself.

### Symptoms from extreme heat can last a long time.

- People usually experience health effects during a heatwave, but some people might have symptoms that last weeks or months.

### It is important to be prepared for extreme heat events.

#### Make an extreme heat kit

- Bottled water
- Cups
- Large basins or water jugs
- Ice packs and ice
- Containers to hold ice
- Towels
- Sunscreen
- Fruit and vegetables
- Taxi vouchers
- Tin foil
- Misting bottles
- Take Home Naloxone kits
- First aid supplies
- Lightweight clothing
- Indoor and body thermometers

There may be barriers to getting these supplies. Find what you can and reach out for support.

<https://towardtheheart.com/assets/uploads/1701214254iAqETDnFGiiVjA1aquEf2wLN7t1CGW004cPUYe.pdf>  
<https://towardtheheart.com/assets/uploads/1701213981VQoNIwNHT09Jee1ArLarMjFN9vmtCXIcSMMkty.pdf>

# Stock up on supplies

**toward**  
THE heart.com  
HEALTHY HEAT REACTION SERVICE

## Prepare an Extreme Heat Kit

**It is important to be prepared for extreme heat events.**

<b>Drinking fluids</b>	<b>Bottled water</b> <b>Ice cubes</b>	<b>Rehydration solution</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2½ cups water</li> <li>• 1½ cups unsweetened orange juice</li> <li>• ½ teaspoon salt</li> </ul>
<b>Containers</b>	<b>Drinking cups</b> <b>Water basins or jugs</b>	<b>Ice packs</b> <b>Containers or bags for ice</b>
<b>Supplies for your body</b>	<b>Sunscreen- SPF 15+</b> <b>Towels</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep wet towels in the fridge or freezer</li> </ul>	<b>Misting bottles</b> <b>Clothing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• light-coloured and loose-fitting</li> <li>• Wide-brimmed hat</li> <li>• Sunglasses</li> </ul>
<b>Supplies for your home</b>	<b>Thermometers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Body and indoor thermometer</li> </ul>	<b>Tin Foil</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place on the windows to reflect heat away</li> </ul>
<b>Medical supplies</b>	<b>First aid supplies</b>	<b>Take home naloxone kit</b>

**There may be barriers to getting these supplies. Find what you can and reach out for support.**

For more information visit: [www.towardtheheart.com](https://towardtheheart.com)  
Last updated: 24-Aug-2023

<https://towardtheheart.com/assets/uploads/17012140740x2HLoFIdGd0u82tPrulF481wtoNmEASgBVWfWI.pdf>

# Plan for shade



# Cool down science

## Hydration

- Water is best
- Doesn't need to be cold – just cool
- In fact people tend to drink less if the water is cold and will consume more when the water is cool



## Cold draping + soaking

- Good to get towel, cloth or t-shirt wet and drape it over large parts of the body
- Good to cover large areas of the body like chest, groin, legs, back
- Once the cloth is drying or warm, get it wet with cold water and apply to the body again
- Immersing the body in water or soaking feet in cold bath can be effective
- Ice packs on the back of neck
- Note: misting is less effective than cold draping – if misting or using spray to keep cool, person must ensure they stay wet



# Activities *during heat*



# What to do during heat event

- Increase outreach
  - moving with harm reduction supplies, cooling supplies
- Stocking of these supplies at encampments
- Heat check-ins for vulnerable folks (support moving)
- Create more shade
- Utilize municipal cooling and water resources
- What is planned for smoke?

# Checklist: Signs of heat illness

Signs of Severe Heat Illness (Heat Stroke) – check those that apply	What to do
<input type="checkbox"/> High body temperature	<p><b><u>This is a medical emergency</u></b></p> <p>Promptly call 911/transfer person to emergency department</p> <p>Immediate cooling of the person is required. Soak shirts or other materials in cool water and place on the person. If available, place ice packs in the underarm and in the groin to assist in cooling.</p> <p><b>Do not give the person fluids.</b></p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Fainting or loss of consciousness	
<input type="checkbox"/> Confusion or disorientation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of coordination	
<input type="checkbox"/> Very hot and red skin	
Signs of Mild/Moderate Heat Illness Signs – check those that apply	What to do
<input type="checkbox"/> Heavy sweating	<p>Get the person to a cool place.</p> <p>Encourage removal of extra clothes.</p> <p>Give the person plenty of water.</p> <p>*If an Urgent Primary Care Center exists in the region, consider transport for further assessment.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Dizziness	
<input type="checkbox"/> Nausea, feeling sick or vomiting	
<input type="checkbox"/> Rapid breathing & heartbeat	
<input type="checkbox"/> Headache	
<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty concentrating	
<input type="checkbox"/> Muscle cramps	
<input type="checkbox"/> Extreme thirst	
<input type="checkbox"/> Skin rash	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dark urine/urinating less	

## BC HEAT ALERT RESPONSE SYSTEM (HARS) IDENTIFIES 2 PRIMARY HEAT EVENT LEVELS:

### 1. Heat Warning: Very Hot / 5% ↑ Mortality / ~1-3 Per Summer

- Two consecutive days where daytime temps exceed established thresholds and overnight temps stay above established minimums
- Thresholds and minimums set by region
- Declared automatically by Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)

### 2. Extreme Heat Emergency: Dangerously Hot / 20% ↑ Mortality / ~1-2 Per Decade

- Heat Warning criteria met
- Forecast indicates that daily highs will increase day-over-day for 3+ consecutive days
- Declared by the BC Health Effects of Anomalous Temperatures (HEAT) Committee

#### ➤ BC HEAT Committee

- Co-chaired by BCCDC and Ministry of Health Emergency Management Unit

BC Provincial Heat Alert  
and Response System  
(BC HARS): 2024



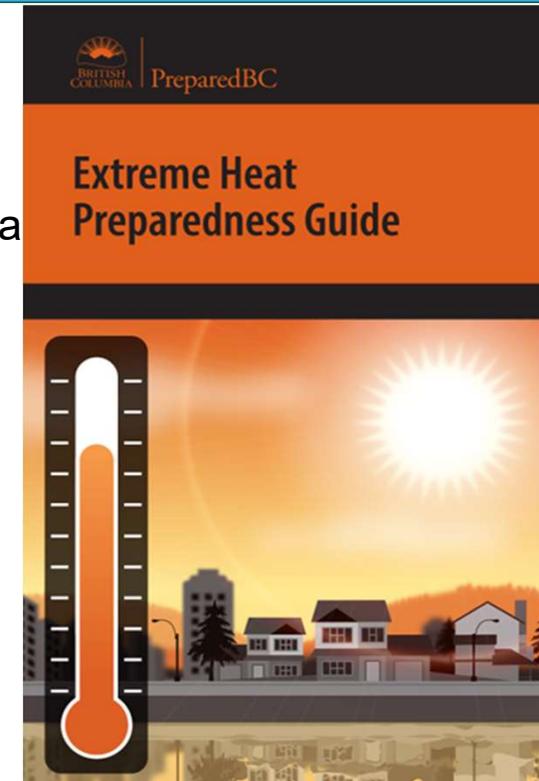


## BC HEAT WARNING CRITERIA:

PROVINCIAL REGION	TEMPERATURE THRESHOLDS	
	Daytime Highs	Overnight Low
<b>Northeast</b> <i>Includes the Northern &amp; Central Interior and the Peace Region</i>	≥29°	≥14°
<b>Northwest</b> <i>Includes Northern &amp; Central Coast &amp; Northern Vancouver Island</i>	≥28°	≥13°
<b>Southeast</b> <i>Includes the Southern Interior, Okanagan and Kootenays</i>	≥35°	≥18°
<b>Southwest</b> <i>Includes Western Metro Vancouver, Whistler, Sunshine Coast &amp; Vancouver Island</i>	≥29°	≥16°
<b>Southwest Inland</b> <i>Includes Eastern Metro Vancouver and the Fraser Valley</i>	≥33°	≥17°

## EMCR RESPONSE TO HEAT EVENTS

- Provide planning/response advice to communities
  - If requested by the community
- Amplify ECCC Yellow & Orange Weather Notifications to communities via
  - Issued to the EM community in advance to facilitate planning
- Amplify ECCC Heat Warnings to:
  - Community emergency programs via email / phone calls
  - The general public via EmergencyInfoBC
- Organize Regional Coordination Calls
  - When appropriate during significant heat events
  - Health Authorities typically attend
- Amplify Extreme Heat Emergencies:
  - To community emergency programs via email/phone calls
  - The general public via EmergencyInfoBC
  - Through the issuance of intrusive BC Emergency Alerts to Radio/TV and/or cellular phones
    - When recommended by the BC HEAT Committee

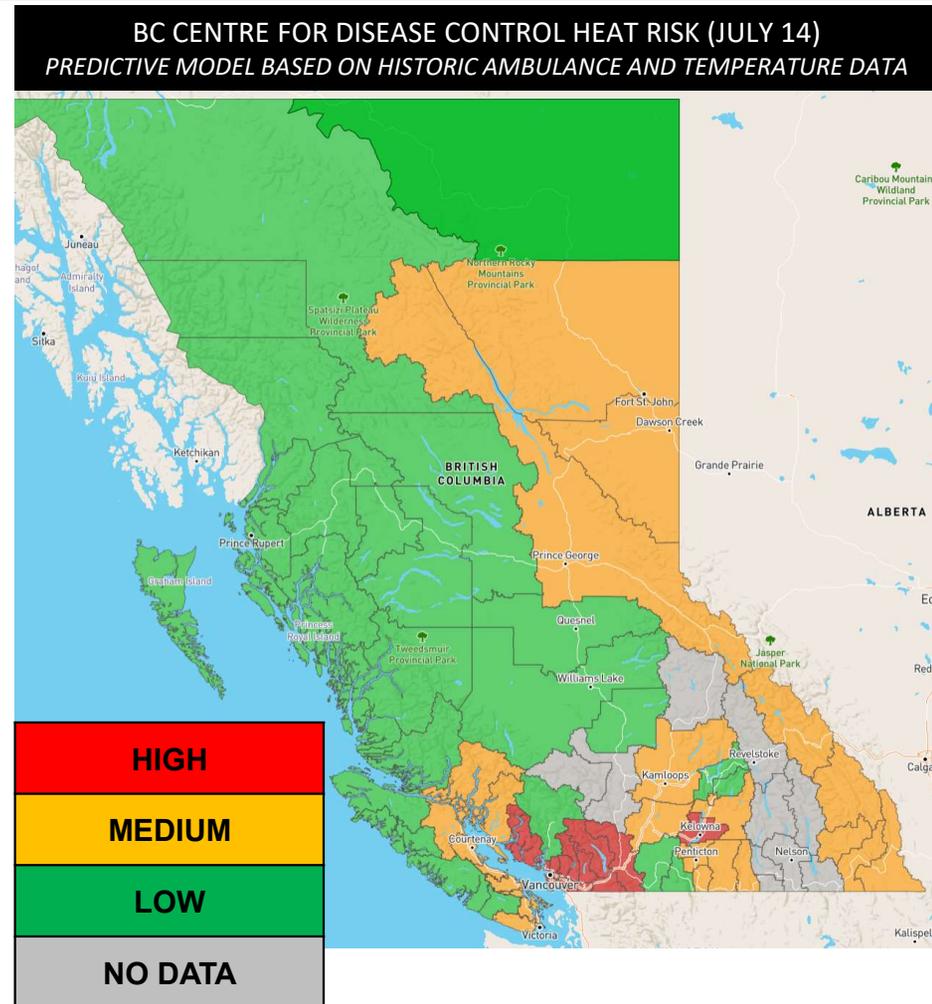


## EMCR RESPONSE TO HEAT EVENTS

- EMCR reimburses Communities for incremental response costs associated with Heat Events when
    - **There is an Environment & Climate Change Canada (ECCC) weather alert in place for heat:**
      - Heat Warning
      - Heat Watch (Rare)
      - Special Weather Statement for Heat
    - **Triggers are met as outlined in a community's own extreme weather plan.**
  - Eligible incremental costs can include:
    - Cooling Centres (facilities & staff wages)
    - Bottled water
    - Cooling device rental
    - Maintenance of cooling location data on the EmergencyInforBC Community Response Locations Portal
- *For More Information*
- *See EMCR Policy 5.14 & associated Eligibility Assessment Addendum*

## CURRENT HEAT EVENT

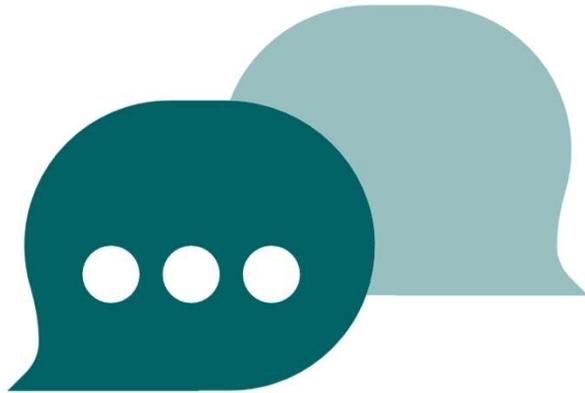
- BC HEAT Committee reports provincial indicators of heat-related illness are within expected ranges.
- Further provincial heat response actions have not been requested.
- EMCR has supported over 48 community Cooling Centres spread across all 6 EMCR Regions.
  - Greatest number in the Southwest and Vancouver Island Coastal Regions.
- Communities have posted over 300 Public Cooling Space locations on EmergencyInfoBC.





**Questions?**

[extremeheat@bchousing.org](mailto:extremeheat@bchousing.org)



## **Invitation to share feedback on recent heat wave**