



Security Spotlight

An Informational Guide for Securitas Clients

Too hot

Heat waves are a common occurrence during US summers. A heat wave occurs when an area has several consecutive days of excessively high temperatures. The National Weather Service (NWS) developed a series of heat-related alerts that describe the severity of expected heat danger.

Excessive heat WATCH—An excessive heat event is likely to occur in the next 12 to 48 hours. A watch is issued to allow sufficient time to prepare for a potential extreme heat event.



Hot weather safety

The heat and strong sun associated with the summer months can make working outdoors difficult and sometimes dangerous. The combination of high temperatures, humidity, and direct sun exposure—also referred to as the “heat index”—contributes to heat stress and can negatively impact the body.

People who spend time working or playing outside on hot days should take steps to protect themselves against heat, sun exposure, and other hazards that can come with hot weather.

Hydration for health

If working or engaging in outdoor activities when there are elevated temperatures, experts recommend drinking about five to eight ounces of water every 15 to 20 minutes to stay sufficiently hydrated and maintain a safe core body temperature.

Studies show that it only takes one hour in extreme heat conditions before a person’s alertness and endurance are compromised. After two hours, the effects of heat stress—cramps, fatigue, loss of strength, and reduced coordination may set in.



Excessive heat **WARNING** or **ADVISORY**

—An excessive heat event is occurring, imminent, or expected in the next 36 hours. A warning is used for conditions posing a threat to life or property. An advisory is issued for less serious conditions that cause significant discomfort or inconvenience but could lead to a threat to life or property if proper precautions aren't taken.



Drinking before, during, and after exercise can help keep the body hydrated by replacing body fluid lost through sweat and exertion. Don't wait to feel thirsty—by then dehydration has already set in. Water is best for hydration, but sports drinks containing electrolytes to replace those lost through perspiration, are an alternative.

Cool water is absorbed more quickly by the body than warm or very cold fluids. Avoid coffee, tea, and alcoholic beverages—all of which contribute to dehydration.

Cover up

Sunlight contains ultraviolet (UV) radiation which can lead to premature aging of the skin, wrinkles, and skin cancer. The amount of damage from UV exposure depends on the strength of the light, the length of exposure, and whether the skin is protected. To block the sun's harmful rays, cover up. Wear a wide-brimmed hat and tightly-woven clothing—preferably a long-sleeved shirt and long pants. One way to test the amount of protection your clothing offers is to place your hand behind it and hold it up to the light. If you can see your hand through the fabric, the garment offers little protection.

Eye protection is important too. Wear UV-absorbent shades. Some studies have shown a greater chance of cataracts among those who do not wear sunglasses in bright sunlight.

Use sunscreen on any exposed skin. To be effective, the sunscreen should have a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30. If possible, limit your exposure by minimizing the time spent when the sun is at its peak. UV rays are most intense between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Because UV is present even on hazy days and it is still possible to get a sunburn, use sunscreen whenever you go outside; even if it doesn't seem necessary, and whenever possible, spend time in the cool shade.

Signs of distress

Learn the symptoms of heat-related illness to help protect yourself and others.

Heat exhaustion—Headache, dizziness, or fainting; lethargy and clammy skin; irritability or confusion; and thirst, nausea or vomiting. Intervene to keep the situation from escalating.

Heat stroke—Confusion, passing out and seizures as well as an inability to sweat. This is a serious condition.

SEEK HELP IMMEDIATELY

Heat-related sickness can be life-threatening. If you suspect someone is ill from the heat, move the person to a cooler area and contact a supervisor. Do not leave the person alone.

If a person is not alert or seems confused, they might have heat stroke. Contact a supervisor and **CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY**. Administer first aid and apply ice as soon as possible.

Stay safe during the hot summer months. Prepare when excessive heat is forecasted. Recognize the warning signs of heat exhaustion and take appropriate action.

Learn more from the [OSHA Heat Stress Quick Card](#), and by visiting www.redcross.com, <https://www.weather.gov/wrn/summer-safety>, and www.cdc.gov.

