



## Severe Weather – Summer

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### Background

Over the last couple of years, the temperature in Pitt Meadows hit record breaking daily highs, reaching well over 35 degrees Celsius. Over the last several years, temperatures in parts of Europe and North America have reached record highs that have resulted in illnesses and sometimes even deaths. Severe heat can cause heat stroke and dehydration, and is also a factor in poor air quality, which can be a problem for those with respiratory difficulties.

Hot, dry weather also increases the risk of fires, due to dry vegetation that can easily ignite.

### What you can do

In severely hot weather, remember the following guidelines:

- Do not leave children or pets in a parked car. Leaving the window cracked will not keep the inside of the car at a safe temperature.
- Drink lots of water, and don't wait until you're thirsty to do so.
- Stay in the shade or use sunscreen with an SPF 15 or higher to avoid sunburn.
- Limit work/exercise; if you can't avoid it, drink lots of fluids (two to four glasses of water per hour) and limit activity to early morning/late afternoon.
- Check regularly on seniors for signs of heat-related illnesses. Signs include thirst, dizziness, confusion, weakness, nausea/vomiting, faintness, confusion, high body temperature and lack of coordination or collapsing
- Make your home as comfortable as possible:
  - Close blinds and shutters during the daytime. If it's safe to do so, open your windows at night to let in cooler air. If you have children in your home, make sure you've taken precautions to prevent falls from windows and balconies.



- Air conditioning can help keep rooms cool. Do not over-cool and remember that circulation of fresh air is important to reduce the risk of COVID-19.
- Take shelter in the coolest room in your home and use a fan. Blowing a fan across a pan of ice water can create a cool breeze.
- Cool showers and misting yourself and your clothing with cool water will help keep you from overheating.

#### What to expect during a heat wave

During extreme heat waves, the City will offer “cooling centres” for people to drop in and cool off. These centres are air-conditioned public buildings such as the Pitt Meadows Family Recreation Centre and the Pitt Meadows Library. Residents are also encouraged to cool off at Harris Road Pool or the free waterpark at Harris Road Park.

### Questions & Answers

#### What are the dangers of the heat?

The main short-term dangers are dehydration from not drinking enough water, heat exhaustion and heatstroke.

Dehydration occurs when the body’s water content is reduced. It can prevent the body’s systems from regulating themselves and can cause a number of complications.

Heat exhaustion occurs when the body’s temperature rises to between 37°C and 40°C, causing nausea, faintness and heavy sweating.

Heatstroke sets in if the body’s temperature rises above 40°C, preventing the cells and body systems from functioning normally. Those affected may develop rapid breathing, headaches, lethargy, confusion and even loss of consciousness. Unless emergency treatment is given, it can result in multiple organ failure and death.

#### What do I do if I become ill?

Heat exhaustion and heatstroke require prompt treatment to prevent complications. People with suspected heat exhaustion should be kept cool and given plenty to drink, which should lead to a quick recovery without any remaining ill effect. If heat exposure persists and the person becomes confused, it means that heatstroke is developing and urgent medical treatment is required.

#### Who is most at risk from the heat?

Seniors, infants and young children, those with existing chronic medical conditions (such as heart or respiratory problems), people with mobility problems, and those who abuse drugs or alcohol are most at risk. People who are normally fit and healthy can also raise their risk by exerting themselves in the heat, for example by taking part in sports or athletics.



How should I protect my children?

Babies and young children are particularly at risk from the dangers of hot weather and the sun. They should be closely monitored because they are more vulnerable than adults. Keep these guidelines in mind:

- Keep children, particularly babies, out of direct sunlight as much as possible,
- Place them in the shade or preferably in a cool room indoors,
- Give them plenty of water to drink to prevent dehydration, and
- Protect their delicate skin with clothing and sunscreen.

Parents should also be aware of the need for these precautions when sending their young children to school or daycare.

Learn more

[Fraser Health Authority – Beat the Heat](#)

[Fraser Health Authority – Summer Health](#)

[Health Link BC - Emergency Treatment of Heat Stroke](#)

[Health Link BC – Ultraviolet Radiation](#)