



STATE OF FLORIDA

DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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FLORIDA EMERGENCY MANAGERS URGE CAUTION TODAY THROUGH WEDNESDAY AS DANGEROUS HEAT INDICES ARE EXPECTED

TALLAHASSEE- Florida emergency management officials strongly urge residents and visitors to the Sunshine State to continue to use caution this week as afternoon temperatures remain above normal in the 95-100 degree range with heat indices of 105 -115 degrees from Escambia County east to Leon County.

"Temperatures will be dangerously high across portions of North Florida for the next few days," said State Meteorologist Amy Godsey. "It is vital that our residents and visitors take extreme caution by remaining hydrated and avoiding extended hours in the afternoon sun when possible."

The National Weather Service has issued heat advisories for the Central Panhandle due to extremely dangerous heat indices which are expected to persist for several hours. Counties included in the Heat Advisory are: Walton, Bay, Washington, Holmes, Gulf, Calhoun, Jackson, Franklin and Leon counties. An Excessive Heat Warning is also in effect for the western tip of the Panhandle due to heat indices reaching 110 degrees and higher. Counties included in the Excessive Heat Warning are: Escambia, Santa Rosa and Okaloosa counties.

What is the Heat Index?

Surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico, Florida is often influenced by tropical moisture, especially during the summer months. When high humidity values combine with high temperatures, our bodies think it is hotter than it actually is. This is called the **heat index**. [The heat index is an accurate measure of how hot it really feels when relative humidity is added to the actual air temperature.](#) When the heat index reaches more than 105 degrees Fahrenheit, conditions become dangerous for the general population.

A person can experience sunstroke, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and even heatstroke if exposed to these conditions for a long period of time. The National Weather Service will issue heat advisories and warnings when the combination of heat and humidity causes the heat index to reach extreme levels.

Heat Safety Tips

- **Dress for the heat.** Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Light colors will reflect away some of the sun's energy. It is also a good idea to wear a hat or to use an umbrella.
- **Drink water.** Carry water or juice with you and drink continuously even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid alcohol and caffeine, which dehydrate the body.

- **Eat small meals and eat more often.** Avoid high-protein foods, which increase metabolic heat.
- **Slow down and avoid strenuous activity.** If you must do strenuous activity, do it during the coolest part of the day – morning hours between 4 and 7 a.m.
- **Stay indoors when possible.** If air conditioning is not available, stay on the lowest floor out of the sunshine. Remember that electric fans do not cool, they simply circulate the air.
- **Be a good neighbor.** Check in on elderly residents in your neighborhood and those who do not have air conditioning.
- **Don't forget your pets.** Make sure they have access to water, ventilation and shade.

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