FLORIDIANS URGED TO USE CAUTION AS HEAT INDICES SOAR THIS WEEK
~Emergency Managers provide safety tips~

TALLAHASSEE – State and local emergency management officials are urging residents and visitors to the Sunshine State to use caution as afternoon temperatures climb to the 95 -100 degree range and heat indices reach 105 -110 degrees in many inland areas of the state this week. National Weather Service Forecast Offices in Florida may issue heat advisories for multiple counties as temperatures peak during the middle and later portions of this week.

“While many Floridians are used to summertime temperatures, it is important that everyone drink plenty of fluids and take steps to avoid extended hours in the afternoon sun where possible,” said Ruben D. Almaguer, interim director of the Florida Division of Emergency Management.

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’s 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.
For more information on the Florida Division of Emergency Management and to GET A PLAN!, please visit: www.FloridaDisaster.org. All students, teachers and parents can find educational information and free downloadable materials at: www.KidsGetAPlan.com. And for the latest daily situation and flash reports go to: www.YouTube.com/FloridaSERT.

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