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RE: Heat Awareness Day

The Genesee County Health Department wants to remind residents that May 27, 2016 is Heat Awareness Day. Extreme heat events or heat waves are a leading cause of extreme weather-related deaths in the U.S. and the number of heat related deaths is rising. On average, 675 deaths from extreme heat events occur each year in the United States. Most vulnerable are the elderly, those who work or exercise outdoors, infants and children, the homeless or poor, and people with a chronic medical condition.

As we approach the summer months please take the necessary precautions to prevent serious health effects such as heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

Stay cool

- Stay in air-conditioned buildings.
- Go to an air conditioned mall or community center if you do not have air conditioning.
- Do not rely on a fan as your primary cooling device.
Limit outdoor activity, especially midday when it is the hottest part of the day, and avoid direct sunlight.
- Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- Take cool showers or baths to lower your body temperature.
- Check on at-risk friends, family and neighbors at least twice a day.

Stay hydrated

- Drink more water than usual and don't wait until you're thirsty to drink.
- Drink from two to four cups of water every hour while working or exercising outside.
- Avoid alcohol or liquids containing high amounts of sugar.
- Make sure your family, friends and neighbors are drinking enough water.

Stay informed

- Check your local news for extreme heat warnings and safety tips.
- Keep your friends, family and neighbors aware of weather and heat safety information.

Additionally, the health department encourages all residents to learn the signs and first aid response for heat-related illness. Warning signs and symptoms vary but may include:

Heat Exhaustion Symptoms

- Heavy sweating
- Weakness
- Skin cold, pale, and clammy
- Weak pulse
- Fainting and vomiting

What You Should Do

- Move to a cooler location.
- Lie down and loosen your clothing.
- Apply cool, wet cloths to as much of your body as possible.
- Sip water.
- If you have vomited and it continues, seek medical attention immediately.

Heat Stroke Symptoms

- High body temperature (above 103°F)
- Hot, red, dry or moist skin
- Rapid and strong pulse
- Possible unconsciousness

What You Should Do

- Call 911 immediately – **this is a medical emergency.**
- Move the person to a cooler environment.
- Reduce the person's body temperature with cool cloths or even a bath.
- Do **NOT** give fluids.

For more information on extreme heat visit <http://www.cdc.gov/extremeheat/> or contact the Genesee County Health Department at (810) 257-3612.