



P R E S S R E L E A S E

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 17, 2021

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PERIOD OF EXTREME HEAT CAUSES COOLING CENTER TO OPEN

SHASTA COUNTY – During extremely hot weather, Shasta County Health and Human Services Agency follows its heat response plan, which includes sharing information about staying safe in hot temperatures and working with community partners to open cooling centers. Forecasters anticipate the excessive heat to continue, with high overnight low temperatures.

In the City of Shasta Lake, due to a lack of public air-conditioned places, a **cooling center at the Community Center** at 4499 Main Street will open from Noon to 8 p.m. today and Friday.

Cooling centers differ from public air-conditioned places, such as malls or libraries in that they are dedicated sites for respite from extreme heat during specific times of day. Those who do not have access to air conditioning at home are encouraged to find relief at a cooling center. Limited public air-conditioned places are also available, including the Redding Library.

Extra COVID-19 precautions will be put in place at the cooling center. All community members, regardless of vaccination status, are asked to use masks and remain physically distanced inside the cooling center.

Prolonged exposure to excessive heat can lead to heat-related illnesses, including heatstroke. Heatstroke is the most serious heat-related illness. Symptoms include: altered mental state; red, hot and dry skin; rapid pulse, throbbing headache, and confusion or unconsciousness. Without immediate treatment and cooling, people with heatstroke can die. Heat exhaustion may include heavy sweating, weakness, nausea and can turn into heatstroke if the person is not cooled down quickly. Excessive heat may also cause fainting or heat cramps.

Some health conditions such as obesity, fever, dehydration, heart disease, poor circulation, sunburn, certain medications and drug and alcohol use can increase risk for heat-related illness and death. Excessive heat can also increase the risk of heart attacks and related conditions. During this stretch of extreme heat, be sure to:

- Drink plenty of water
- Avoid dehydrating beverages like
 - Caffeinated drinks (tea, coffee, energy drinks and sodas)
 - Alcohol
 - Sugary drinks
- Stay cool indoors
 - Stay in an air-conditioned area, if possible
 - Take a cool shower or bath to cool off
 - Swamp coolers and fans may not sufficiently prevent heat illness during extreme heat
- Wear light clothing and sunscreen
 - Choose lightweight, light-colored and loose-fitting clothing
 - Use a wide-brimmed hat to keep your head cool
 - Use a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher and reapply every two hours while in the sun (all skin types)
- Schedule outdoor activities carefully
 - Try to be less active during midday and late afternoon, the hottest part of the day
 - Rest often in a shady area
 - Never leave kids or pets in a parked car
- Pace yourself
 - Take frequent, regularly scheduled breaks in a cool or shaded place
 - If your heart pounds, you become out of breath, lightheaded, weak or feel faint, stop your activity, drink water or juice, and rest in a cool or shady area
 - If you or someone you know is experiencing throbbing headache, hot dry skin, or confusion with the heat, seek immediate medical attention. Also, move to a cool area, hydrate, and rest until get to medical attention
- Use a buddy system
 - Check on your friends and family and have someone do the same for you

- Check on the elderly and people with health conditions twice a day during a heatwave

Please do your part to stay safe and watch out for family members and vulnerable populations. For more information on heat-related safety go to www.shastahhsa.net and click **“Staying Safe in Hot Temperatures”** at the top of the page.