

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Release # 2013-08

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SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS URGE RESIDENTS: PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS DURING A HEAT WAVE

STOCKTON, CA (June 28 2013) - San Joaquin County is experiencing a wave of prolonged high heat and humidity that can be dangerous and even life-threatening. "Take precautions that will protect yourself and your family, but I also encourage you to reach out and extend your help to others," said Dr. Cora Hoover, San Joaquin County Assistant Public Health Officer.

Although anyone can suffer from heat-related illness, some people are more vulnerable including:

- Infants and young children are sensitive to the effects of high temperatures and rely on others to regulate their environments and provide adequate liquids.
- People 65 years of age or older may not compensate for heat stress efficiently and are less likely to sense and respond to a change in temperature.
- People with underlying medical conditions (such as heart or lung problems) or who take certain medications, such as for depression, insomnia, or poor circulation, may be affected by extreme heat.
- People who are overweight may be prone to heat sickness because of their tendency to retain more body heat.
- People who overexert during work or exercise may become dehydrated and susceptible to heat sickness.
- People who are economically disadvantaged, homeless, live in substandard housing, may not have access to working air conditioning.
- People who are isolated may not know when, where or how to cool off - or who to call for help.

You can help yourself and others stay healthy and safe during a heat wave by using a Buddy System:

- Visit adults at-risk twice a day and closely watch them for signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Infants and young children, of course, need more supervision.
- When working in the heat, monitor the condition of your co-workers and have someone do the same for you. Heat-induced illness can cause a person to become confused or lose consciousness.

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- If you are 65 years of age or older, have a friend or relative call to check on you twice a day during a heat wave. If you know someone in this age group, check on them at least twice a day.
- If someone needs immediate, life-saving help, call 9-1-1.

Heat stress can result in heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps, or heat rashes. Warning signs of early heat stress include heavy sweating, muscle cramps, headache, nausea or vomiting, tiredness, weakness, dizziness and fainting. Heat-related symptoms that require immediate medical attention are:

- confusion or unconsciousness
- hot and dry skin (no sweating)
- elevated body temperature
- rapid heart rate
- shallow breathing

If you see someone with the symptoms above:

- immediately call 9-1-1
- begin aggressive cooling measures
 - cool victim with water
 - place large soaking wet cold towels or sheets over the victim, or immerse the victim in a tub of cool water
 - place ice packs in the underarm and groin areas

For local information and resources visit the San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services website, <http://www.sjgov.org/oes/>.

Additional information can be found by visiting the following websites:

San Joaquin County Public Health Services, http://www.sjcphs.org/Disease/Heat_Emergencies.aspx

California Office of Emergency Services,

<http://www.calema.ca.gov/planningandpreparedness/pages/heat.aspx>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/index.asp>

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