

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS URGE RESIDENTS TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS FOR EXCESSIVE HEAT**

STOCKTON, CA (June 27, 2013) - Temperatures in San Joaquin County are predicted to rise above 100 degrees this week and extend into next week. Local public health officials are urging the public to take precautions to prevent heat stress. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, each year more people in the United States die from extreme heat than from hurricanes, lightning, tornadoes, floods and earthquakes combined.

“Groups especially at risk for heat stress are the elderly, adults with disabilities, chronically ill, children under 4 years old and anyone who works or exercises vigorously outdoors,” advises Dr. Cora Hoover, San Joaquin County Assistant Public Health Officer. In addition, health conditions such as obesity, fever, dehydration, heart disease, poor circulation, sunburn and drug and alcohol use can make it harder for the body to stay cool in hot weather.

Health officials recommend that individuals take the following precautions to protect themselves and their loved ones, including pets during hot weather:

- Get plenty to drink
  - Drink more fluids, especially water
  - Avoid drinks with caffeine and alcohol
- Stay cool indoors
  - Stay in an air conditioned area, if possible
  - If you don't have air conditioning, go to a shopping mall or public building for a few hours
  - A cool shower or bath is also a good way to cool off
- Wear light clothing and sunscreen
  - Choose lightweight, light-colored and loose-fitting clothing
  - A wide-brimmed hat will 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 late afternoon, the hottest part of the day
  - Rest often in a shady area

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- Keep a container of cool water nearby and use wet washcloths to pat the wrists, face and back of neck
- Never leave children, seniors or pets in a parked car
- Pace yourself
  - Take frequent, regularly scheduled breaks
  - If your heart pounds, you become out of breath, lightheaded, confused, weak or feel faint, stop your activity and rest in a cool or shady area
- 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 heat wave

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

San Joaquin County Public Health Services has begun outreach to local media and the community offering guidance on ways to reduce heat-related illnesses. Due to the rising temperatures forecasted for San Joaquin County, officials will continue to closely monitor weather reports.

For more information about extreme heat, visit the following websites:

San Joaquin County Public Health Services, [http://www.sjcphs.org/Disease/Heat\\_Emergencies.aspx](http://www.sjcphs.org/Disease/Heat_Emergencies.aspx)

San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services, <http://www.sjgov.org/oes/>

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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Attachments: Beat the Heat flyers (English and Spanish)