



Columbia/Boone County Department of Public Health and Human Services  
1005 West Worley Columbia MO 65203

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## **For Immediate Release**

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### **Health Department Urges Caution as Heat Advisory is Issued** *Cooling Centers Open for Those Who Need Relief*

The National Weather Service has issued a Heat Advisory for Boone and surrounding counties, in effect from noon tomorrow (Thursday) thru Saturday (June 30<sup>th</sup>) at 7 pm. The Columbia/Boone County Department of Public Health and Human Services reminds residents to be aware of the many dangers posed by hot weather.

The heat is especially dangerous to the very young, the elderly and the chronically ill because they are more vulnerable to the effects of high temperatures. These individuals perspire less and are more likely to take medications that can impair the body's response to heat and make them more sensitive. Some of these medications include antipsychotic, major tranquilizers, antihistamines, over-the-counter sleeping pills, antidepressants and cardiac drugs.

Heat-related illness occurs when the body's temperature control system is overloaded. The body normally cools itself by sweating, but when the humidity is high, sweat will not evaporate as quickly, preventing the body from releasing heat quickly. Very high body temperatures may damage vital organs and spur heat-related illness including heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat strokes.

It is important to recognize and react to signs of heat-related illness. Heat stroke is the most serious heat-related disorder. It occurs when the body becomes unable to control its temperature. The body's temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails and the body is unable to cool down. When heat stroke occurs, the body temperature can rise to 106 degrees Fahrenheit or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not given.

Symptoms of heat stroke can include: hot, dry skin or profuse sweating; hallucinations; chills; throbbing headache; high body temperature; confusion; dizziness and slurred speech. If you suspect someone is suffering from heat stroke, call 911 immediately. Move the person to a cool shaded area and cool the person by soaking their clothes with water; spraying, sponging, or showering them with water or fanning their body.

A less lethal, but still serious heat-related illness is heat exhaustion. Heat exhaustion is the body's response to an excessive loss of the water and salt, usually through excessive sweating. Symptoms of

heat exhaustion include: heavy sweating; extreme weakness or fatigue; dizziness; confusion; nausea; clammy, moist skin; pale or flushed complexion; muscle cramps; slightly elevated body temperature and fast and shallow breathing. Persons suffering from heat exhaustion should rest in a cool, shaded or air-conditioned area; drink plenty of water or other cool, nonalcoholic beverages and take a cool shower, bath or sponge bath.

There are things you can do to prevent heat related illnesses including:

- Dress for the heat (light-colored, light-weight clothes) and use a hat or umbrella to block the sun
- Drink water and avoid alcohol beverages and caffeine
- Eat small meals and eat more often
- Stay indoors with air-conditioning when possible
- Take regular breaks when physically active

The most efficient way to beat the heat is to spend time in an air-conditioned area. Electric fans may be useful to increase comfort or to draw cool air into your home at night, but do not rely on a fan as your primary cooling device during a heat wave. Citizens are urged to check on elderly family or neighbors regularly. It is also important never to leave children or pets unattended in hot environments without air conditioning (including unsupervised vehicles) and to watch for signs and symptoms of dehydration.

The department offers residents who do not have air-conditioning access to Cooling Centers located throughout Columbia. The nine locations listed below are not shelters; they are open to the public during their regular business hours and provide air-conditioning, access to restrooms and sometimes drinking water. Cooling Centers are not equipped to handle residents in need of medical treatment or those who need a place to sleep. Cooling Center locations should only be used for relief from the heat.

<b>Name of Facility</b>	<b>Street Address</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Hours of Operation</b>
ARC	1707 West Ash Street	Columbia	573-874-7700	Normal business hours
Armory Sports and Community Center	701 East Ash Street	Columbia	573-874-7466	Normal business hours
Boone County Government Center	801 East Walnut	Columbia	573-886-4305	Normal business hours
Columbia Public Library	100 West Broadway	Columbia	573-443-3161	Normal business hours
Missouri United Methodist Church	204 South 9th Street	Columbia	573-443-3111	Normal business hours
Oakland Senior Center	805 Old Hwy 63 North	Columbia	573-449-8000	Normal business hours
Public Health and Human Services Department	1005 West Worley	Columbia	573-874-7345	Normal business hours
Salvation Army	1108 West Ash Street	Columbia	573-442-3229	Normal business hours
Salvation Army Harbor House	602 North Ann	Columbia	573-442-1984	Normal business hours