

HENRY COUNTY OFFICE OF
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND SAFETY

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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
9 A.M. CDT, August 12, 2010

CENTRAL BUILDING OFFERED TO KEEP COOL

August 12, 2010 (Paris, TN) Henry County Emergency Management advises that Henry County continues to be under an "Excessive Heat Advisory" through the weekend and wishes to remind citizens the high temperatures forecasted are very dangerous and to take precautions when outside. These high temperature conditions are especially dangerous to elderly persons who may have to be outside or may not have air conditioning. Tennessee has already had 15 heat related deaths this summer, mostly in the Memphis area.

Ron Watkins, County Emergency Management Director, states a hot air mass remains over the area and temperatures will continue to be around or exceed 100 degrees. The combination of heat and humidity will result in heat index values of 110 to 116 degrees through the weekend. A cold front will approach the mid south Saturday night and Sunday, possibly giving Northwest TN a slight relief.

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Erica Hill, Conger Senior Center Director, will make available the Conger Senior Center and Central Community Building Gym to senior citizens who may need an alternate place to keep cool from 8 AM to 4 PM each day. The Central Community Building is air conditioned and will provide relief from the heat if needed. Central Community Building is located at 55 Jones Bend Rd Extended. The Central Building gym will be made available throughout the weekend for persons needing a cool place to go. No overnight accommodations will be made available, however.

Henry County Emergency Management will continue to monitor the weather forecast and will work with Conger Senior Center and Central Community Building to keep the building available if needed. Watkins recommends all citizens take the heat serious and limit time spent outdoors during the hottest period of the day. Watkins adds, "It is important to know that a extreme heat advisory means conditions will be too warm to allow the body to cool off properly and heat related illness may occur. Check on the elderly and children regularly who are more susceptible to heat related illness.

The Tennessee Department of Health offers these safety precautions to be followed during excessive heat conditions:

- **Drink plenty of fluids.** Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink. Remember to consume non-alcoholic, low-sugar drinks in hot weather.
- **Replace salt and minerals.** Heavy sweating from increased temperatures can deplete your body's salt and minerals. Non-alcoholic drinks, like sports drinks, can help you replenish these reserves.

- **Wear appropriate clothing and sunscreen.** Choose lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing, as well as a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses with UV protection. Wear SPF 15 or higher sunscreen every day.
- **Schedule outdoor activities carefully.** Try to limit outdoor activity to morning and evening hours with rest breaks in shady areas, if available.
- **Pace yourself.** If you are unaccustomed to working or exercising in a hot environment, start slowly and increase effort gradually. If your heart is pounding or you are gasping for breath, stop the activity and rest in a cool, shady area.
- **Stay cool indoors.** If your home does not have air conditioning, go to the mall or library to cool off. Cool showers or baths, as well as keeping your stove and oven off, are other ways to cool down inside.
- **Use the buddy system.** Partner with a friend and watch for signs of heat-related illness in each other. Senior citizens are more susceptible, so if you are over 65, ask a friend to check on you over the phone twice a day. If you know someone in this age group, remember to check on them at least twice a day.
- **Monitor those at high risk.** Infants and children under 4 years of age, people over 65, people who are overweight, those who overexert themselves during work or exercise and people who are physically ill (especially those who have

heart disease or high blood pressure, take certain medication, or suffer from insomnia, depression or poor circulation) are especially at risk.

- Do Not leave children or pets in the car parked without air conditioning during excessive heat. It only takes a few minutes for temperature to reach above 100 degrees in a car.

Call for immediate medical assistance if you believe you or another person is experiencing heat stroke. While waiting on emergency assistance, get the victim to a shady area, cool them rapidly using cool water and monitor body temperature until it reaches 101 to 102 degrees Fahrenheit, and do not give the victim any fluids to drink.

For more information about heat-related illnesses, including prevention and treatment tips, visit the CDC's Extreme Heat Safety Web site at

http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/heat_guide.asp.

For more information on senior citizen services, contact Erica Hill at the Conger Senior Center at 644-3193 or the Central Building main office at 642-3758 or the Henry County Emergency Management Office at 644-2678.

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