



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

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CONTACT: Judd Everhart, 860-524-7313
judd.everhart@ct.gov

**Governor Rell Issues Heat Advisory and Announces 800 Number
*Urges Special Attention for Elderly and Pets***

As Connecticut endures dangerous heat and humidity under an “excessive heat watch,” Governor M. Jodi Rell today issued a special advisory aimed at the elderly, young children and those with respiratory conditions. She also released a series of tips and suggestions for coping with the heat and for pet care during the ongoing heat wave.

Governor Rell said the state will activate a toll-free phone number Tuesday morning at 8:00 AM for residents needing heat-related assistance. The number is 1-800-830-9426. As always, in the event of a medical emergency, citizens should call 9-1-1, the Governor said.

Governor Rell directed the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) to reach out to local emergency management directors and verify that evacuation and other contingency plans are in place, especially at nursing homes and other residential facilities. At the Governor’s direction, DEMHS will also encourage local mayors and first selectmen to establish “cooling centers,” such as at movie theaters and senior centers, and keep them open as late as possible.

The Governor said that the American Red Cross in Connecticut is also working with local communities to prepare to open “cooling centers” as needed. One was opened over the weekend in Norwich to assist numerous residents who had lost power.

The temperature is expected to be well into the 90s and may top 100 by Wednesday, according to Connecticut forecasters and the state Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security. In addition overnight lows in the larger urban centers may not fall below 80 degrees Tuesday night and Wednesday night presenting a continued danger for those without air conditioning or proper ventilation.

“This brutal combination of heat and humidity will result in very dangerous conditions across Connecticut,” Governor Rell said. “This heat wave has the potential to be a serious life threatening situation if precautions are not taken especially for the elderly, children and those who work outside. I urge everyone to simply slow down and avoid strenuous activity as much as possible.”

The Governor also issued the following information regarding heat stroke, heat exhaustion and heat cramps:

- **HEAT STROKE** is the most serious heat-related illness and is accompanied by hot, dry skin; shallow breathing; a rapid, weak pulse; and confusion. Heat stroke occurs when a person's body temperature exceeds 105 degrees Fahrenheit and could render the victim unconscious.

Health officials advise that if you believe that someone has heat stroke, call for emergency medical treatment or have the person taken to the hospital immediately. While waiting for emergency personnel, move the victim to a cool area out of direct sunlight; sponge bathe with cool water; and fan. If possible, relocate the person to an air-conditioned room.

- **HEAT EXHAUSTION** is characterized by heavy sweating, weakness and cold, pale, clammy skin. There may also be fainting and vomiting. If someone appears to be suffering from heat exhaustion, they should be moved to a cool area out of direct sunlight, sponge bathed with cool water and fanned. Also, give sips of water to the individual every 15 minutes for one hour.
- **HEAT CRAMPS** are characterized by painful spasms, usually in muscles of the legs and abdomen and by heavy sweating. To relieve heat cramps, apply firm pressure on cramping muscles or gently massage the muscles. As in the case of heat exhaustion, give sips of water every 15 minutes for one hour.

Regarding pets, Governor Rell said:

- Never leave pets in a car or other enclosed area for any period of time.
- Pets should be kept indoors during excessive heat.
- If keeping a pet outside, be sure that pets have adequate shelter from the sun and plenty of water at all times.
- Check on pets frequently and look for signs of stress (panting, lethargic movement etc.).

“Fortunately, we know the current heat wave will ‘break’ soon, but it is smart to be ready with plans for any contingency,” Governor Rell said. “By taking precautions, we can get through the current hot spell, and the rest of the summer.”