

## **WEATHER EMERGENCY (SEVERE WEATHER)**

The National Weather Service has developed a system of "watches" and "warnings" that are issued when severe weather conditions may exist.

The District Office Facilities and Operations Office will monitor alerts and weather advisories if a severe windstorm "Watch" has been issued. (A "Watch" is issued by the National Weather Service when a thunderstorm in excess of 55 m.p.h. or a tornado may develop in a given area and during a specific time frame.)

If a "WARNING" is issued by the National Weather Service the closing of the District may be appropriate if there is sufficient time before the anticipated arrival of the storm. If it appears too dangerous to leave, the order may be given to shelter in place. The District will consider activating the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) if a warning is issued.

### ***If Severe Weather (Storm) Threatens:***

- Remain calm.
- Alert all personnel to the situation and direct them to safety.
  - Remain inside.
  - Notify all personnel of the windstorm.
  - Evacuate areas that bear full force of wind.
  - Avoid enclosures with long roof spans.

### ***If There is no Advance Warning:***

- Remain calm.
- Alert others in the immediate area to the situation and direct them to safety.
- Take cover immediately in interior rooms or along an inside wall. Try to find a place away from large, heavy objects, and windows.

### ***If Extreme Heat is Expected:***

- Take common-sense steps keep cool:
  - Drink plenty of fluids.
  - Do not drink liquids that contain alcohol or large amounts of sugar—these actually cause you to lose more body fluid. Also avoid very cold drinks, because they may cause stomach cramps.
  - Wear appropriate clothing and sunscreen. Choose lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing. If you must go outdoors, protect yourself

from the sun by wearing a wide-brimmed hat (also keeps you cooler) along with sunglasses, and by putting on sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher (the most effective products say "broad spectrum" or "UVA/UVB protection" on their labels) 30 minutes prior to going out. Continue to reapply it according to the package directions.

- Replace salt and minerals. If you are on a low-salt diet, talk with your doctor before drinking a sports beverage or taking salt tablets.
- Schedule outdoor activities carefully. If you must be outdoors, try to limit your outdoor activity to morning and evening hours. Try to rest often in shady areas so your body will have a chance to recover.
- Pace yourself. If you are not accustomed to working or exercising in a hot environment, start slowly and pick up the pace gradually. If you become lightheaded, confused, weak, or faint, stop all activity. Immediately move to a cool or shaded area and rest.
- Stay indoors and, if at all possible, stay in an air-conditioned place.
- Use a "Buddy System". When working in the heat, monitor the condition of your co-workers and have someone do the same for you.
- Monitor those at high risk. Although anyone may suffer from heat-related illness, some people are at greater risk than others.
- Infants and children up to four years of age are sensitive to the effects of high temperatures and rely on others to regulate their environments and provide adequate liquids.
- Senior citizens or elderly people may not compensate for heat stress efficiently and are less likely to sense and respond to changes in temperature.
- 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 physically ill, especially with heart disease or high blood pressure, or who take certain medications, such as for depression, insomnia, or poor circulation, may be affected by extreme heat.
- Visit "at-risk" adults at least twice a day and closely watch them for signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Infants and young children, of course, need much more frequent watching.
- Do not leave children or pets in cars. Even in cool temperatures, cars can heat up to dangerous temperatures very quickly. Even with the windows cracked open, interior temperatures can rise almost 20 degrees Fahrenheit within the first 10 minutes. Anyone left inside is at risk for serious heat-related illnesses or even death. Children who are left unattended in parked cars are at greatest risk for heat stroke, and possibly death. When traveling with children, remember to do the following:

- Never leave infants, children or pets in a parked car, even if the windows are cracked open.
- To remind yourself that a child is in the car, keep a stuffed animal in the car seat. When the child is buckled in, place the stuffed animal in the front with the driver.
- When leaving your car, check to be sure everyone is out of the car. Do not overlook any children who may have fallen asleep inside.