

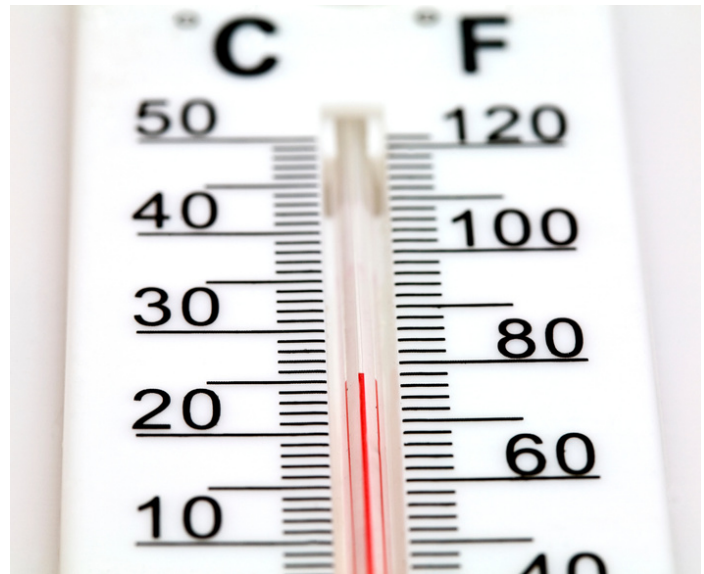
CHILD CARE FACILITIES & HEAT

Why should I pay attention to heat?

Extreme heat can trigger a variety of heat-related illnesses including dehydration, heat exhaustion and **heat stroke, a medical emergency** that can lead to permanent disability or death.

Infants and young children are especially sensitive to the health effects of heat, particularly those with pre-existing conditions or who take certain medications.

Making sure that children have a way to stay cool and drink plenty of water is the best way to prevent heat-related illnesses.



Signs of heat exhaustion:

- Skin rash
- Heavy sweating
- Dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Rapid breathing & heartbeat
- Headache
- Difficulty concentrating
- Muscle cramps
- Extreme thirst
- Dark urine & decreased urination

Anyone with these symptoms should be moved to a cool space, given plenty of water to drink, and cooled down with water applied to the skin.



Signs of heat stroke:

- High body temperature (above 38°C)
- Fainting or decreased consciousness
- Confusion
- Lack of coordination
- Very hot and red skin

CALL 911 OR SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION. Submerge some or all of the body in cool water, remove clothes and apply wet towels.



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What can I do to prepare for the heat season?

- ☐ It is recommended that child care facilities expand their emergency plan to include a **plan to respond to extreme heat**.
- ☐ **Prepare staff** to recognize the signs of heat illness and know when it is an emergency.
- ☐ Know where to get information on **heat alerts**.
 - [Public Weather Alerts for British Columbia](#)
 - [Weather App](#)
- ☐ Learn about ways to **keep the building cool** during the summer. Some examples include:
 - Install exterior window shading or glazing to reduce sun penetration into the indoor space.
 - Plant trees on the side of the building where the sun hits the building during the hottest part of the day and use trees to create shade in the outdoor play space.
 - Contact a professional to install a green roof on the building.
 - If passive cooling (e.g. outdoor shading or glazing, closing blinds, opening windows and using fans to bring outdoor air in during the evenings) is not enough to keep your building comfortable, consider installing an energy efficient active cooling system (i.e. heat pump) to be used on hot days. Ideally temperatures should be below 26 degrees indoors.
 - If the entire facility cannot be cooled, consider creating a specific cooling room with air conditioning where children can cool off for a few hours on hot days.
 - If the building has air conditioning, make sure it works properly before the hot weather starts.
- ☐ Look up nearby locations to visit where children can cool off for a few hours a day during extreme heat events (e.g. a public library, community center, shaded park, etc.).



CHILD CARE FACILITIES & HEAT

What should I do during a heat alert?

- ☐ Check the latest **heat alert information** and weather forecast.
- ☐ **Pay close attention** to how children are feeling and watch for signs of heat illness.
- ☐ Give children **plenty of water**.
- ☐ **Keep the children and indoor space cool.**
 - Keep shades and blinds closed during the day.
 - If you don't have air conditioning, close windows around 10:00am to trap the cooler air inside and open windows and doors around 08:00pm to let the cooler overnight air in.
 - Use multiple fans strategically to help move cooler air into the space overnight if possible
 - Prepare meals that don't need to be cooked in an oven.
 - Make sure children and staff are dressed for the weather with loose fitting and light-coloured clothing made of breathable fabric.
 - Reschedule outdoor activities to cooler times of the day and avoid sun exposure when outside.
 - If the building is hot:
 - Provide sprinklers outdoors.
 - Apply cool water or wet towels to the skin or have the children wear wet shirts.
 - Give children a break from the heat by ensuring they spend a few hours in a cool place (e.g. air conditioned room, community center, library, tree-shaded area etc.).

Note: Fans cannot effectively reduce body temperatures or prevent heat-related illness in people at risk. Do not rely on fans as your primary cooling method during an Extreme Heat Emergency.

Heat Resources

Public Weather Alerts for British Columbia	BC weather alerts
Weather App	Push notifications for all weather alerts issued by Environment and Climate Change Canada for your location and saved locations anywhere in Canada
Health Canada Keep Children Cool	Resource on protecting children from extreme heat
Vancouver Coastal Health Extreme Heat Webpage	Information for the public, community partners and health professionals regarding extreme heat, including a number of links to public factsheets and resources
Vancouver Coastal Health Extreme Heat Poster	A poster describing heat illness symptoms and how to stay cool during a heat event.
HealthLinkBC Heat-related illness	Information on heat related illness symptoms and prevention for the public in multiple languages
Health Canada Staying Healthy in the Heat Infographics	Three 1-page cartoon infographics: "Signs and Symptoms", "Who's at Risk" and "Safety Tips"
BC Housing Extreme Heat Information for Tenants	Poster from BC Housing on tips to beat the heat
Prepared BC Extreme Heat Guide	A new BC guide to help you prepare for the season and know what to do during an extreme heat event.