

The Newsladder

Hot Weather Health Dangers—Heat Exhaustion, Heat Cramps, and Heat Stroke

Recently we have experienced unusually high temperatures in our area. With these temperatures, comes some severe health dangers.

Heat exhaustion is one of the heat-related syndromes, which range in severity from mild heat cramps to heat exhaustion to potentially life-threatening heat stroke. Signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion often begin suddenly, sometimes after excessive exercise, heavy perspiration and inadequate fluid intake. Signs and symptoms resemble those of shock and may include:

- Feeling faint or dizzy
- Nausea
- Heavy sweating
- Rapid, weak heartbeat
- Low blood pressure
- Cool, moist, pale skin
- Low-grade fever
- Heat cramps
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Dark-colored urine

If you suspect heat exhaustion:

- Get the person out of the sun and into a shady or air-conditioned location.
- Lay the person down and elevate the legs and feet slightly.
- Loosen or remove the person's clothing.
- Have the person drink cool water.
- Cool the person by spraying or sponging him or her with cool water and fanning.
- Monitor the person carefully. Heat exhaustion can quickly become heatstroke.
- If fever greater than 102 F (38.9 C), fainting, confusion or seizures occur, dial 911 or call for emergency medical assistance.

Heat cramps are painful, involuntary muscle spasms that usually occur during heavy exercise in hot environments. The spasms may be more intense and more prolonged than typical nighttime leg cramps. Inadequate fluid intake often contributes to heat cramps. Muscles most often affected include those of your calves, arms, abdominal wall and back, although heat cramps may involve any muscle group involved in exercise.

If you suspect heat cramps:

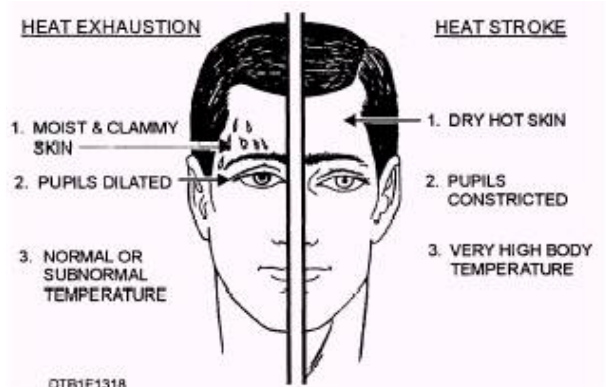
- Rest briefly and cool down
- Drink clear juice or an electrolyte-containing sports drink
- Practice gentle, range-of-motion stretching and gentle massage of the affected

muscle group

- Call your doctor if your cramps don't go away in one hour

Heat stroke is a life-threatening condition that occurs when your body temperature reaches 104 F (40 C) or higher. Heat stroke can be brought on by high environmental temperatures, by strenuous physical activity, or by other conditions that raise your body temperature. Whatever the cause, you'll need immediate medical attention to prevent brain damage, organ failure or death. Heat stroke is the escalation of two other heat-related health problems: heat cramps and heat exhaustion. You can prevent heat stroke if you receive medical attention or take self-care steps as soon as you notice

problems.
www.mayoclinic.com



If you have to work outside:

Workers should avoid exposure to extreme heat, sun exposure, and high humidity when possible. When these exposures cannot be avoided, workers should take the following steps to prevent heat stress:

- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting, breathable clothing such as cotton.
- Avoid non-breathing synthetic clothing.
- Gradually build up to heavy work.
- Schedule heavy work during the coolest parts of day.
- Take more breaks in extreme heat and humidity.
- Take breaks in the shade or a cool area when possible.
- Drink water frequently. Drink enough water that you never become thirsty.
- Avoid drinks with caffeine, alcohol, and large amounts of sugar.

www.cdc.gov



Hurricane Season Tips



Since hurricane season began on June 1, the Tallahassee Fire Department (TFD) would like to remind citizens to remain vigilant in staying prepared for an emergency.

So, will this be a busy year? Global weather patterns are imposing a greater uncertainty in the 2009 hurricane season outlook than in recent years. Forecasters say there is a 70 percent chance of having nine to 14 named storms, of which four to seven could become hurricanes, including one to three major hurricanes (Category 3, 4, or 5) during the season that runs through November 30.

The Department offers the following hurricane tips:

- * Find out if you live in an evacuation area. If you do, know your evacuation routes. If you do not need to evacuate, make sure you are prepared to stay in your house during a storm. Residents are encouraged to look in their local telephone book for evacuation routes.

- * Consider purchasing a weather alert radio. These special radios provide official information directly from the National Weather Service and can be purchased from an electronics store. Prepare to be without electricity for an extended period of time. Stock



up on batteries for radios and flashlights.

- * Have at least a 3-day supply of water and nonperishable food.

- * Identify shelter options such as a friend or relative's house, a motel or public shelter.

- * Pets are not allowed in public shelters, so make arrangements for their care prior to evacuation.

- * As the storm approaches, prepare for high winds by covering all windows with plywood or installing storm shutters.

- * Move all outdoor furniture, tools and loose items inside.

- * Officials also suggest establishing a communication plan with out-of-state relatives or friends. If phone lines are damaged or cell phone circuits are jammed, as often happens during a major emergency, it may be difficult to contact loved ones directly.

For more information please visit www.nhc.noaa.gov or the TFD web page at www.talgov.com.



A hurricane unleashes its fury. Be prepared this hurricane season.



Nothing is better to cool off from the summer heat than a swim in your pool.

Remember these tips to make it a safe experience:

Learn to swim. The best thing anyone can do to stay safe in and around the water is to learn to swim--this includes adults and children. The City's Parks and Recreation Department and the American Red Cross offers swimming classes for people of any age and swimming ability. To enroll in a course to learn or improve your ability to swim, contact Parks & Rec or the local Red Cross chapter.

Never leave a child unobserved around water. Your eyes must be on the child at all times. Adult supervision is recommended. Although drowning rates have slowly declined (Branche 1999), drowning remains the second leading cause of injury-related death for children ages 1 to 14 years (CDC 2005). Keep a cordless phone nearby so that you can call 9-1-1 in an emergency.

Learn Red Cross CPR and insist that babysitters, grandparents, and others who care for your child know CPR.

Enclose the pool completely with a self-locking, self-closing fence with vertical bars. Openings in the fence should be no more than four inches wide. The house should not be included as a part of the barrier.

Never leave furniture near the fence that would enable a child to climb over the fence.

Always keep basic lifesaving equipment by the pool and know how to use it. Pole, rope, and personal flotation devices (PFDs) are recommended.

Keep toys away from the pool when it is not in use. Toys can attract young children into the pool.

Pool covers should always be completely removed prior to pool use.

If a child is missing, check the pool first. Go to the edge of the pool and scan the entire pool, bottom, and surface, as well as the surrounding pool area .

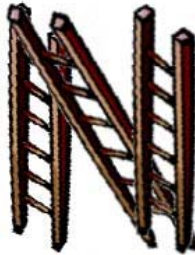
Following these tips can help ensure your splashes are safe ones.

For more information on water safety visit the American Red Cross website:

www.redcross.org

THE CITY OF TALLAHASSEE AND
THE TALLAHASSEE FIRE DEPARTMENT
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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.TALGOV.COM

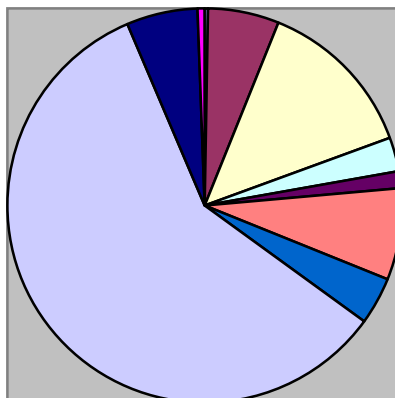
The Newsladder is a publication of the
Tallahassee Fire Department
Intended For
The Citizens of Tallahassee

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TFD by the Numbers

April 1—June 30, 2009

Total Calls- 5330



■ Airport Alerts- 12	■ Brush/Rubbish- 319
■ Building Alarms- 709	■ Structure Fires- 151
■ Vehicle Fires- 69	■ Vehicle Rescues- 399
■ Hazard Invest.- 205	■ Medical- 3127
■ Service- 308	■ Misc. Rescue- 31