



# BE PREPARED FOR SUMMER HEAT WAVES

## Did You Know?

Cooling and heating your home uses more energy and energy dollars than any other system in your home. Follow these simple and practical tips to conserve energy, save on your utility bills and stay cool during the hot summer months:

**T**he Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission has launched its Summer Heat Wave Awareness Campaign to inform Pennsylvanians about ways they can reduce their energy consumption while staying cool and healthy. It's a matter of energy conservation, but, more importantly, it's a matter of health and safety.



## 10 EASY WAYS TO STAY COOL AND CONSERVE ENERGY

-  In hot, humid summer months set your thermostat at 78 degrees when you are home and 85 degrees or off when you are away.
-  Keep drapes closed and shades drawn. The amount of energy required to cool your home will be considerably less.
-  Replace filters monthly for maximum benefit and check air and return vents on a regular basis to keep circulation air paths clear.
-  Request a "home energy audit" from your local utility to identify any areas where energy is being lost and to find out ways to save on your heating and cooling bills.
-  Clothes dryers and dishwashers produce a lot of heat. Use them in the early morning or late evening, not in the heat of the day.
-  Use only lights and appliances you really need. Even a basic light bulb can add heat to a room.
-  Use a microwave oven instead of a conventional range or oven.
-  Wash full loads of clothes in cold water whenever possible and avoid over-drying.
-  Relax in rooms that do not receive direct sunlight or stay on the lowest floor of your home.
-  Air leaks waste energy dollars year-round. Caulking and weather-stripping will help keep cool air in.

## DID YOU KNOW ?

In a normal year, about 175 Americans succumb to the demands of summer heat. Follow these health and safety tips to reduce your risk of experiencing a heat-related illness:

### 10 EASY WAYS TO STAY HEALTHY AND SAFE

- ☀ Older adults and people with chronic health problems should stay indoors during a heat wave and in the coolest available place.
- ☀ Spend some time in air conditioning, if possible. Even just two hours a day in air conditioning can significantly reduce the risk of a heat-related illness.
- ☀ Strenuous activity should be reduced, eliminated or rescheduled to the coolest time of the day.
- ☀ Avoid overexposure to sunlight. If you must be out in the sun, use sunscreen and wear a hat.
- ☀ Drink plenty of water even if you don't feel thirsty. Your body needs water to keep cool.
- ☀ Avoid alcoholic beverages and beverages with caffeine such as coffee, tea and cola. They make the heat's effects on your body worse.
- ☀ Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Light colors will reflect away some of the sun's energy and help your body maintain normal temperatures.
- ☀ Don't leave children or pets in a closed vehicle – even for a few minutes. Temperatures inside a closed vehicle can reach 140 to 190 degrees within 30 minutes on a hot day.
- ☀ Eat small meals and eat more often. Avoid foods that are high in protein, which increase metabolic heat and increase water loss.
- ☀ Avoid using salt tablets unless directed to do so by your physician.

#### Heat Warning

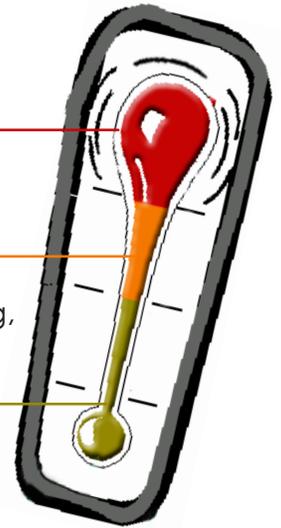
Life-threatening heat is occurring, imminent or highly likely

#### Heat Advisory

High and potentially dangerous values of heat index are occurring, imminent or highly likely

#### Heat Watch

Excessive heat is possible in the next day or two



#### PEOPLE AT THE GREATEST RISK OF HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS INCLUDE:

- ☀ Infants and children up to four years of age.
- ☀ People 65 years of age or older.
- ☀ People who are overweight.
- ☀ People who overexert during work or exercise.
- ☀ People who are ill or on certain medications.

### For More Information

For more information on ways to save energy and stay cool, visit the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission at [www.puc.pa.gov](http://www.puc.pa.gov). For additional fact sheets on managing your energy bills, Utility Choice programs, or on the Summer Heat Wave Awareness Campaign, contact the PUC, Office of Communications at (717) 787-5722.