2011 Heat-Relief Network: Fact Sheet

A Heat-Relief Network composed of community and faith-based organizations to help provide **hydration, refuge and wellness checks** for homeless, elderly and people with disabilities during extreme summer weather conditions.

How you can help:

Hydration Station - Includes three components:

1. **Distribution – An organized effort by staff and/or volunteers within a participating organization to distribute water to the homeless, elderly and people with disabilities in their community or surrounding areas**
   - Setting up a centralized hydration site with scheduled availability
   - Conducting outreach to the homeless, elderly or to people with disabilities in the area or surrounding areas

2. **Collection – An organized effort to collect water**
   - Organizing a water drive within your organization or your community
   - Fund raising – collecting money to purchase water

3. **Storage - Providing space for the storage of water**
   - Water may be packaged in cases, pallets or individual bottles
   - Water supplies can be drawn from the community supply

For more information about hydration efforts or to learn how you can get involved, contact **Tim Cole at 602-534-5463** or at **tim.cole@phoenix.gov**

Heat Refuge - An organized effort to provide a hydration station and a safe, cool place indoors during the day for the homeless population within your community.

For more information about refuge efforts or to learn how you can get involved, contact **Tim Cole at 602-534-5463** or at **tim.cole@phoenix.gov**

Donor/Collector - An organized effort to obtain bottled water for use by Hydration Stations and Heat Refuges.

- Collect donations of bottled water at your location
- Notify the Heat-Relief Network of water availability

Wellness Checks - An organized effort, by a participating organization's staff and/or volunteers, to identify and coordinate wellness checks on individuals in their communities who are potentially at high risk for heat stress.

- Training is available and will provide an overview of the dangers of heat stress and provide information on what to look for and how to treat heat stress if it occurs.

For more information on Wellness Check training, contact **Tim Cole** or at **tim.cole@phoenix.gov**

Staying Healthy in Arizona's Deadly Summer Heat

Arizona's heat is not just uncomfortable, it is dangerous and deadly! On a hot day, a person can produce as much as 2 to 3 gallons of sweat. Because so many heat illnesses involve excessive dehydration of the body, **it is essential that water intake during the day be about equal to the amount of sweat produced**. People who work or live outdoors, young children, and the elderly are at greater risk to suffer from heat-related illness. This is an important time to check on your neighbors, especially if they are elderly or living alone.

Heat-related illness falls into three major categories:

Heat cramps are muscular pains and spasms that occur when the body loses electrolytes during profuse sweating or when inadequate electrolytes are taken into the body. They usually begin in the arms, legs or abdomen, and often precede heat exhaustion. Treatment for heat cramps is to rest in shade, get near a fan, spray the person with water and massage the cramp.

Heat exhaustion is a medical emergency. When a person is suffering from heat exhaustion, they will perspire profusely and most likely will be pale. Heat exhaustion is best treated by taking the person to a cool place, applying cool compresses, elevating feet and giving fluids.

Heat stroke is the worst heat-related injury. The brain has lost its ability to regulate body temperature. The person will be hot, reddish and warm to the touch. Their temperature will be markedly high and there will be no perspiration. **This is a medical emergency: call 9-1-1**. The emergency care of heatstroke is to cool the body as quickly as possible. One of the best methods for cooling the body during a heat emergency is to wrap the patient in cool, wet sheets.

Other tips to avoid heat-related illness:

- Never leave infants, children or pets inside a parked vehicle.
- Increase fluid intake, regardless of activity level. Don't wait until thirsty to drink fluids; drink more liquid than one's thirst indicates.
- There is no optimum temperature of drinking water, but most people tend not to drink warm or very cold fluids as readily as they will cool ones.
- Avoid "heat hangover." Continue to drink fluids even after strenuous activity. This will enable the body to maintain optimum hydration, and help prevent the after effects of heat exposure such as headaches and fatigue.
- Avoid beverages containing alcohol, caffeine or large amounts of sugar as they dehydrate the body.
- Avoid very cold beverages as they cause stomach cramps.
- Never depend on thirst to signal when and how much to drink. Instead, drink 5 to 7 ounces of fluids every 15 to 20 minutes to replenish the necessary fluids in the body.
- Limit exercise or outdoor activity between the hours of 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., when the sun is at its peak intensity. If active during this time frame, drink a minimum of 16 to 32 ounces of water each hour.
- Wear a sunscreen with a minimum SPF 15, and apply at least 30 minutes before going outdoors.
- When outdoors, rest frequently in shady areas so that your body can recover.
- Take special precaution with infants and young children by dressing them in loose, cool clothing and shading their heads and faces with hats or an umbrella. Protect their feet with shoes.
- Carry bottled water with you in the car for yourself, your passengers, and for anyone you see who might be suffering from the heat. **If you see someone you believe is in heat distress, call 911 for assistance……..You could save a life!**