

**Watch, Warning, Advisory**

The National Weather Service issues alerts for excessive heat on a county-by-county basis. The alerts are broadcast on NOAA Weather Radio and on local radio and television stations. The parameters of an excessive heat watch, warning, and advisory vary by location. Generally:

- **Excessive Heat WATCH** means conditions are favorable for an event to meet or exceed local excessive heat warning criteria in the next 12 to 48 hours. .
- **Excessive Heat WARNING** means that heat values are forecast to meet or exceed locally defined warning criteria for at least two days.
- **Excessive Heat ADVISORY** means hazardous heat conditions have begun or will begin within 36 hours and, if caution is not exercised, they could become life threatening.

**ACTION MESSAGES**

**Be Prepared for a Heat Wave  
Protect Yourself**

**Core Action Messages**

- Learn the risks.
- Prepare members of your household.
- Plan how to get relief from and avoid the dangerous effects of excessive heat.

For general preparedness, every household should create and practice a Family Disaster Plan and assemble and maintain a Disaster Supplies Kit. In addition, households at risk from heat waves should take precautions to stay safe in case one occurs. Review your Family Disaster Plan before summer heat is expected and be sure to stock additional water.

**If you are at risk from excessive heat, you should:**

- **Discuss with members of your household the precautions they should take to stay safe in excessive heat.** Everyone should know what to do in the places where they spend time. Some places may not be air conditioned or safe during a heat wave, so plan alternatives.
- **If your home does not have air conditioning, choose other places you could go to get relief from the heat during the warmest part of the day.** Schools, libraries, theaters, and other community facilities often provide air-conditioned refuge on the hottest days. See if your area designates cooling centers. Air conditioning provides the safest escape from excessive heat. During the 1995 Midwest heat wave, most deaths happened to people who were not in air conditioned places.