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Public Information Statement Amended
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington DC
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To: Subscribers:
-Family of Services
-NOAA Weather Wire Service
-Emergency Managers Weather Information Network
-NOAAPort
Other NWS Partners, Users and Employees

From: Eli Jacks
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Subject: Amended: Excessive Heat and Sun Safety Guidance for 2012 Season

Amended to change Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) information.

This Friday, May 25, 2012, has been declared national "Don't Fry Day" by the National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention (NCSCP). Once again, the NOAA/NWS is pleased to partner with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), OSHA, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and NCSCP on this campaign to alert the public to the dangers of extreme heat and the need to ensure protection from ultraviolet (UV) radiation.

Heat and UV radiation are silent killers that do not have the same visual impact as other weather hazards such as tornadoes and hurricanes; however, on average, more than 30 outdoor workers have died from heat overexposure each year since 2003. In addition, more than 3 million new cases of skin cancer are diagnosed in the U.S. each year: more than cases of breast, colon, lung and prostate cancers combined. Furthermore, high UV Index values can occur when it is not particularly hot.

Heat can be a killer for children or pets left in parked vehicles. Each year, children left in vehicle die, or suffer permanent, severe health impacts. Last year, 33 children died from hyperthermia. Studies have shown the temperature inside a parked vehicle can rise rapidly to dangerous levels, even on a mild day.

Preventive measures can be taken to avoid the harmful effects of exposure to excessive heat and UV radiation. The first step is to be aware of existing heat and UV radiation services and safety information. Available public resources are:

NWS: Heat-related Watch, Warning, and Advisory (WWA) products are disseminated to NWS' partners and the public whenever excessive heat events are expected. These products can be accessed anytime at:

www.weather.gov

In addition, a variety of resources and information relating to excessive heat is available on the NOAAWatch Website via the "Excessive Heat" tab at:

http://www.noaawatch.gov/themes/heat.php and on the NWS heat safety page at: http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/heat/index.shtml.

These websites provide details on the definitions and intended usage of NWS heat-related products, an explanation of the Heat Index and how it is used in NWS forecast operations, and safety tips for staying safe in the summer heat and sun. Additional information on summer safety, and the associated impacts of excessive heat and sun on the human body is provided via our partners' links cited below.

EPA: Daily updates on the UV Index and associated sun safety steps are available at the "SunWise" Website at:

http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/

A national map depicting forecast elevated and "alert" UV levels for the mid-day period around the contiguous 48 states is provided as an experimental product on the Climate Prediction Center website at:

www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/stratosphere/uv_index/uv_alert.shtml

The "SunWise" Website also provides users with the capability to access their local UV Index by ZIP code and to receive automated UV Alerts via email when UV radiation is anomalously high for a particular location whenever an Alert is in effect. EPA also offers the UV Index as a smartphone application at:

http://www.epa.gov/enviro/mobile/

An Excessive Heat Events Guidebook for the public, developed by the EPA in 2006 in collaboration with the NWS, CDC and the Department of Homeland Security provides guidance communities can use to develop mitigation plans. This guidebook is online at:

http://www.epa.gov/heatisland/about/heatguidebook.html

OSHA: OSHA kicked off the second year of its national heat illness prevention campaign for outdoor workers on May 7, 2012. OSHA has a Heat Safety Tool for smartphones (Heat App) everyone can use to get their local Heat Index and learn what precautions to take to prevent heat illness. Information on the campaign, including OSHA's Heat App, illustrated fact sheets and worksite posters, training resources, and public service announcements are available at:

http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/index.html

NWS and OSHA are also partnering to increase awareness for outdoor workers and their employers during excessive heat events. NWS will continue including specific outdoor worker safety precautions within its Heat Advisories and Excessive Heat Warnings this summer.

CDC: Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States, and the majority of these cancers are caused by exposure to UV radiation. Skin cancer risk can be reduced by seeking shade, wearing protective clothing, using sunscreen with broad spectrum (UVA and UVB rays) protection and sun protection factor (SPF) 15 or higher, and avoiding tanning beds. CDC provides leadership for nationwide efforts to reduce illness and death caused by skin cancer through education, surveillance, and research efforts. Information on skin cancer statistics, prevention, and CDC's skin cancer initiatives is available at:

http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/

NCSCP: The National Council is an umbrella organization of 45 major national groups dedicated to preventing skin cancer, including the American Academy of Dermatology, the American Cancer Society, the Melanoma Research Foundation and the Skin Cancer Foundation, as well as federal agency partners and many smaller family foundations devoted to disease prevention. Specific tips on preventing skin cancer as well as more than 35 "Don't Fry Day" resources, including media guides, posters, graphics and an "Action Kit for Meteorologists" are available at the National Council's website at:

http://www.skincancerprevention.org

NHTSA: NHTSA has been engaging concerned parents, advocacy groups, automotive experts and health and law enforcement professionals across the country to discuss the best ways to raise awareness and to propose strategies for preventing tragic deaths of children in hot cars. This year, the agency launched its "Where's Baby? Look Before You Lock" campaign. This campaign includes radio and online advertisements, template materials, and logos available online for anyone interested in highlighting the dangers of vehicular heatstroke.

www.safercar.gov/heatstroke

The partners offer the following heat wave and UV safety tips:

- Slow down. Strenuous work or recreational activities should be reduced, eliminated, or rescheduled to the coolest time of the day.

- Get acclimated. Gradually increase outdoor work and recreational activities so your body adjusts to hot conditions.

- Dress in lightweight, light-colored clothing to reflect heat and sunlight, and wear sunglasses and hats.

- Drink plenty of water or other non-alcoholic fluids. Drinking alcoholic beverages should be avoided.

- Do not take salt tablets unless directed by a physician.

- Take frequent breaks during work or play. Spend more time in air-conditioned places and seek shade outside, especially during midday hours.

- Check the UV Index, follow the "SunWise" safety steps, and avoid prolonged exposure to the sun. Avoid indoor tanning.

- Never leave any person or pet in a closed, parked vehicle for any amount of time.

- Generously apply sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher that provides broad spectrum (both UVA and UVB rays) protection.

- Know what the signs and symptoms or heat illness are.

- Check on workers, particularly those wearing protective suits.

Elderly persons, small children, chronic invalids, those on certain medications or drugs, outdoor workers, persons with weight and alcohol problems and caretakers for these people should pay especially close attention to the above tips, particularly during heat waves in areas where excessive heat is rare.

Educate yourself and the public on the dangers of excessive heat and overexposure to the sun, and what preventive measures to take to avoid skin cancer and heat-related illnesses or deaths. You can help save lives.

For further information, please contact:

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National Public Information Statements are online at:

https://www.weather.gov/notification/archive

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