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Public Information Statement
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From: Eli Jacks
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Subject: Excessive Heat and Sun Safety Guidance for 2013 Season

This Friday, May 24, 2013, has been declared national "Don't Fry Day" by the National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention (NCSCP). "Don't Fry Day" encourages sun safety awareness by reminding everyone to protect their skin while enjoying the outdoors.

Again this year, NWS is pleased to partner with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and NCSCP on this campaign to alert the public to the importance of practicing sun-safe behaviors. The partnering agencies also wish 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. Furthermore, high UV Index values can occur when it is not particularly hot. Even on a cloudy day, you can get sunburn from UV radiation.

Last summer was the third warmest U.S. summer on record. More than 80 million people experienced 10 or more days of 100 degree Fahrenheit or warmer temperatures during the heat wave of 2012. Heat is one of the leading weather-related killers in this country, resulting in hundreds of fatalities per year.

Skin cancer, which can develop from overexposure to UV radiation, is the most common form of cancer in the United States. More than 3.5 million new cases of skin cancers are diagnosed in more than 2.2 million people annually.

Preventive measures can be taken to avoid the harmful effects of excessive heat and UV radiation. The first step is to be aware of existing heat and UV radiation forecasts and other information. Here is a listing of available resources:

NWS: Heat-related Watch, Warning, and Advisory (WWA) products are sent to

NWS' partners and the public whenever NWS expects excessive heat events. These products can be accessed at:

www.weather.gov

In addition, a variety of 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: Hourly updates of the UV Index and associated sun safety steps are available at EPA's website at:

<http://www2.epa.gov/sunwise>

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

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

EPA's UV Index Website also provides users with the capability to access their local UV Index by zip code and to receive automated UV Alerts via email during Alert periods when UV radiation is anomalously high for a particular location. EPA also offers the UV Index as a smartphone application at:

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

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

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

OSHA: For the third consecutive year, OSHA is conducting a nationwide campaign to educate workers and employers about the hazards of working in the heat and steps needed to prevent heat-related illnesses. Since the campaign began in 2011, OSHA has reached more than 7.5 million people on this important issue.

This summer, the agency hopes to reach even more people with a simple, life-saving message: "Water. Rest. Shade." OSHA has significantly increased outreach to workers with limited English proficiency and has created resources targeted to this audience. OSHA's heat-related publications, including fact sheets, training guides, community posters and quick cards, as well as a Heat App, are available in both English and Spanish. For the latest information on the 2013 Campaign, go to OSHA's website 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 that includes 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>

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

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 clothing, and wear UV-blocking sunglasses and a hat with at least a 2- to 3-inch brim all around.

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 to plan outdoor activities in ways that prevent overexposure to the sun. Avoid sunburns and intentional tanning.

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

Seek shade whenever you can.

Know what the signs and symptoms of 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 on the dangers of overexposure to the sun and excessive heat, 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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