

# Wisconsin Dept. of Military Affairs: Wisconsin's Heat Awareness Day is June 8th

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Madison, Wisconsin – In the last five years, 48 people in Wisconsin died as a result of extreme heat. Health officials say some of these cases could have been prevented. That's why Governor Walker has declared June 8, 2017 as Wisconsin's Heat Awareness Day to remind everyone of the dangers associated with extreme heat.

“People need to be aware of who is at greatest risk and what can be done to prevent the loss of life,” says Major General Don Dunbar, Adjutant General and Wisconsin's Homeland Security Advisor. “A majority of heat related deaths occur in homes without air conditioning. Most of the victims are living alone with a limited support system.”

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) Bureau of Environmental and Occupational Health analyzed death records submitted to the Office of Vital Records from the years 2011-2015 where [heat](#) was an underlying or contributing cause of

death. The most heat-related deaths occurred during the heat wave in 2012, when 26 deaths were reported. In 2015, the most recent year for recorded death data, only one heat-related death was reported in Wisconsin.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there are on average 658 deaths in the U.S. each year caused by extreme heat. This is more than those caused by tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, and lightning combined.

Many victims of heat-related deaths are socially isolated. This is why it is important to check in on family, friends, and neighbors during extreme heat. Those most vulnerable include very young children, the elderly, and people with heart disease or high blood pressure. Individuals who are on certain medications may also be more susceptible to illnesses during extreme heat events. Of the Wisconsin residents that died of heat-related causes in the last five years, more than 70% were older than 65.

Remember these tips:

- **Stay Cool:** Stay in air-conditioned buildings as much as possible and avoid direct sunlight.
- **Stay Hydrated:** Drink plenty of water and don't wait until you're thirsty to drink.
- **Stay Informed:** Watch your local weather forecasts so you can plan activities safely when it's hot outside. Watch for any extreme heat alerts.

People at higher risk of a heat-related illness include:

- Infants and young children.
- People 65 years of age and older.
- People who are overweight.
- People with chronic medical conditions.

Where you are most at risk:

- Homes with little or no air conditioning.
- Cars (Never leave people or pets in a car).

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