

# Recommendations to Municipalities in Response to Heat Warnings

Elevated hot weather conditions can put people's health at risk. Hot weather conditions can be especially dangerous for:

- Seniors
- Infants and young children
- People who work in the heat
- People with chronic illnesses or mental illnesses
- People who are taking certain medications
- People who exercise vigorously or play sports in the heat
- The homeless or under-housed
- People who are socially isolated and
- Persons of low-income.

**In the event a Heat Warning is issued by Environment Canada, the Medical Officer of Health recommends affected municipalities consider the following activities to support their communities:**

- Opening well-identified community cooling facilities and/or extending hours of operation of community buildings such as libraries, community centres, etc. which already cater to heat-vulnerable people;
- Creating a 'doors open' policy for municipally owned buildings to support vulnerable populations;
- Increasing accessibility to community swimming pools and splash pads by extending hours of operation and/or reduction of admittance costs;
- Provide potable water stations throughout the community (i.e., parks, community squares, etc.);
- Provide transportation support to and from cooling facilities (e.g., bus tickets, taxi cards, etc.);
- Provide public education materials through municipal websites.

**Other potential mitigation strategies which can help reduce heat-related illnesses within your communities include:**

- Creating a 'heat-vulnerable list', which through pre-registration identifies individuals vulnerable to heat within your community. During a heat warning, check on pre-registered heat-vulnerable people to ensure their health and safety (through in-person visits or telephone) has not been negatively impacted;
- Develop a "buddy" and/or "Neighbourhood Watch" program to support vulnerable populations;
- Modify or cancel scheduled sports and outdoor events at recreational centres, municipal sports fields and summer camps;
- Deliver services to specific heat-vulnerable groups (e.g. outreach to the homeless);
- Work with community partners to consider the need for an evacuation shelter to ensure overnight capabilities for those in need.