

# 2011 July

## Central Valley Summers and Health

Excessive summer heat can result in life-threatening heat stroke.



Yolo sunflower field. © Dave Feliz.

At its best, a Yolo County summer is hard to beat with its golden sunshine, blue skies, spectacular sunsets, and summer evenings bathed in cool delta breezes. We typically experience 22 days at or above 100° F each year.<sup>46</sup> While you are outdoors working or playing, be mindful of extreme heat, UV rays, mosquitoes, and air quality. Take appropriate precautions for yourself, your family, your pets, and your neighbors.

Summer heat is accompanied by increases in ground-level ozone and particulate matter (dust, smoke, soot). People most susceptible to severe health problems from air pollution include individuals with heart disease or lung disease (asthma, emphysema), pregnant women, outdoor workers, children under age 14, and athletes who exercise vigorously outdoors.



Courtesy CDC

Percent Children (<18 yrs) Ever Diagnosed with Asthma, 2007<sup>40</sup>



Disaster Education & Awareness Month • UV Safety Month

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	29		1	2
3	4 County Holiday Independence Day	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Stay Safe This Summer

In July 2006, California suffered a severe heat wave lasting two weeks. Heat-related illness during this heat wave caused 655 deaths and 16,166 hospitalizations.<sup>34</sup> Here are some tips to stay safe this summer:

- Never leave infants, children, elderly, or pets unattended in a parked car – it can take as little as 10 minutes for the temperature inside a car to rise to levels that can kill.
- When working outside, drink plenty of water or juice even if you are not thirsty, and take rest breaks in the shade.
- Reduce exposure to the sun from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. when UV rays are strongest, and keep physical activities to a minimum during that time.
- Dress appropriately. Wear a wide-brimmed hat to cover the face and neck and wear loose-fitting clothing.
- Wear sunscreen. Liberally apply sunscreen (at least SPF 15) 15 minutes before venturing outdoors and re-apply at least every two hours – sunscreen prevents sunburn, skin cancer, and premature aging.
- Stay cool indoors. Once the temperature reaches the high 90s, fans alone will not be effective. Spend the heat of the day in an air-conditioned home, public building, or cooling center.
- Check on family, friends, and neighbors at risk. Those at higher risk of heat injury include people who do not have access to air conditioning, especially the elderly and young children, and people who work outdoors.
- Adjust to the environment. When heat temperatures increase suddenly, your body needs time to adjust to the changes. Pace yourself. Start activity slowly and increase to a level you can handle. If you have shortness of breath or other symptoms get in the shade and rest.
- If you or someone has a rapid, strong pulse, feels delirious, becomes unconscious, or has a body temperature above 102°F, call 911 immediately. These are symptoms of heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

- Sacramento Region Air Quality
- Workplace Heat Illness Prevention
- Extreme Heat Emergencies
- Hot Weather Tips for Pets

- [www.sparetheair.com](http://www.sparetheair.com)
- [www.dir.ca.gov/DOSH/HeatIllnessInfo.html](http://www.dir.ca.gov/DOSH/HeatIllnessInfo.html)
- [www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat)
- [www.aspca.org/pet-care/pet-care-tips/hot-weather-tips.html](http://www.aspca.org/pet-care/pet-care-tips/hot-weather-tips.html)