

Hot Weather Response Plan

2011 Edition



June 2011

Preamble for Hot Weather Response Plan

The City of Pitt Meadows may experience Hot Weather during the summer months; extreme heat affects people in different ways depending on their age, underlying medical conditions and ability to acclimatize to hot weather conditions. Prolonged exposure to heat over several days without cooling intervals (which typically occur at night) substantially increases heat risks. Socially isolated seniors are at highest risk of heat-related morbidity and mortality. Other at-risk groups include people with chronic and pre-existing illnesses, children and people who are marginally housed or homeless.

In addition to demographic factors, regional characteristics can also contribute to an increase in heat-related risks. Those who live in areas with irregular but intense heat waves (like Pitt Meadows) and/or who experience the urban heat island effect are most affected by oppressive hot weather.

Climate change is expected to bring higher temperatures to the Lower Mainland area in the coming years. Environment Canada predicts summer temperatures to continue to get warmer than previous years based on data from the last 10 years.

In 2011 the Fraser Health Authority began implementing an Extreme Heat Health Warning with a Public Health Recommendation; the Health Authority in conjunction with local municipalities will be issuing heat health advisory/alerts starting the summer of 2011.

Fraser Health Plan

The first stage by Fraser Health is to issue a Heat Advisory based on Environment Canada parameters (temperature and others). Essentially this is a cautionary note to the public and municipalities to be prepared for extreme heat. Should the temperatures continue to rise, an Extreme Heat Alert may be issued with the intent of preventing heat-related deaths.

City of Pitt Meadows Plan

The City of Pitt Meadows, with information from Fraser Health, has created a Hot Weather Response Plan that will be activated at the time that the Fraser Health Authority issues a Heat Advisory. During this phase Public Health along with the City will issue bulletins to residents that a period of extreme heat is on its way. During this advisory general heat health messaging to the public will be issued stating to keep cool, keep wet (drink and splash) and check in on others. An extreme Heat Alert may need to be called should the temperatures continue climbing.

When Fraser Health issues a Heat Alert the objective is to prevent heat-related deaths. A heat health emergency will be called **20 hours** in advance for the entire Lower Mainland when the average of today's **measured** high at 14:00 hours and **tomorrow's** forecasted high equals or exceeds 34 degrees Celsius in Abbotsford.

During Heat Alerts people are encouraged to use air conditioned services and facilities that already exist in the neighborhood as cooling places. This includes libraries, community centres and public shopping malls.

In addition to promoting the use of air conditioned areas as drop-in centres, cooling centres will also be open during Extreme Heat Alerts. The City will establish cooling centres in all of its community buildings (Pitt Meadows Family Recreation Centre, portions of the Heritage Hall, and the new South Bonson Community Centre. These facilities may need to have their hours extended or opened during a heat emergency.

For additional information on the Hot Weather Response Plan and other government links visit the City of Pitt Meadows website at www.pittmeadows.bc.ca. Or <http://www.pittmeadows.bc.ca/EN/main/residents/49118/683/Severe-Weather---Summer.html>

Heat Health Response Stages

Advisory	Agency Responsible	Response
Weather Forecast (extended hot period)	City of Pitt Meadows	Monitoring Environment Canada Weather Forecasts
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Heat Advisory	Fraser Health Notification	Heat Health Messaging During this advisory general heat health messaging to the public will be issued through various communication channels ie: newspapers, the City's website, social media sites and the electronic billboard stating to keep cool, keep wet (drink and splash) and check in on others.
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Extreme Heat Alert	Fraser Health Notification	A heat health emergency will be called 20 hours in advance for the entire Lower Mainland when the average of today's measured high at 14:00 hours and tomorrow's forecasted high equals or exceeds 34 degrees Celsius in Abbotsford. During Heat Alerts people are encouraged to use air conditioned services and facilities that already exist in the neighborhood as cooling places. This includes libraries, community centres and shopping malls. The City will establish cooling centres in all of its community centres (Pitt Meadows Family Recreation Centre, the Heritage Hall, and the new South Bonson Community Centre. Staff will set up specific areas within the buildings for individuals to be able to sit or lay down if necessary. Emergency Social Services may also be called in if deemed necessary.

