



## **Participating in Outdoor Recreation Activities in the Summer Heat**

With your support, Parks & Recreation can continue to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all our athletes. Please encourage your athlete to stay well-hydrated and well-nourished before engaging in any outdoor program.

### **How To Prepare for Hot Weather**

- Listen to the radio/TV/text alerts for weather alerts.
- Dress children in lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting cotton clothing.
- Apply sunscreen at least 15-30 minutes before arriving at camp. Please send sunscreen with your camper to reapply as needed.
- Encourage drinking plenty of water. Avoid soft drinks and caffeinated beverages, especially on camp days.
- Don't expect your child to overdo it! Everything will be a little slower paced on hot days.
- Be sure to inform Parks and Recreation staff of any medical issues that may be impacted by hot weather before the program starts.

### **How Prosper Promotes Healthy Camps**

Temperatures often climb to the 90°F mark or higher and there may be multiple summer days when the Air Quality Index is in the unhealthy range. The following protocols are in place and we are prepared to take action to prevent heat related issues in all age groups. Additional precautions will be taken for preschoolers (and older adults), as they are at higher risk for serious effects of heat and sun exposure.

#### **1. Required Training**

Safety training is required and provided for all Recreation staff:

- Staff members are CPR and First Aid certified.
- Staff members are skilled in how to modify outdoor activities in the case of very hot weather.
- Staff members are trained to recognize symptoms of heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps and sunburn.

## 2. Daily Precautions at Summer Camps

Programs are held in a variety of facilities and locations, each with different options for hot weather modifications. Instead of simply canceling children's fun when the thermometer soars, the Town will take these steps:

- **Hot Weather:** Throughout the summer, when temperatures are 80 °F or above, children are encouraged to drink plenty of water and take the equivalent of a 15-minute break each hour (often several shorter breaks).
- **Heat Advisory: Heat Index of 100 ° F or Above** - When the heat index (combination of temperature and humidity) is 100 ° F or above (90 ° F /60% humidity), the National Weather Service will issue a heat advisory. All classes, camps and programs will take precautions to ensure that individuals are not placed at risk for heat related illnesses or conditions, such as:
  - Modify activities – Programs will limit strenuous exercise and sports activities to short periods, followed by a cooling period.
  - More frequent cooling breaks – Water and shade breaks will happen every 10 to 15 minutes during extremely hot weather.
- **Code Red Days** – In addition to heat, the hazy, hot and humid weather creates another hazard as ground-level ozone builds up to unhealthy levels. These days, there may be warnings that the unhealthy air quality can cause problems for everyone, especially the very young, the elderly and anyone with respiratory disease. Warnings are usually broadcasted a day in advance through radio and television, giving everyone a chance to prepare. You can sign up for email alerts through Clean Air Partners at <http://www.cleanairpartners.net/airalert.cfm>.

Precautions on Code Red Days are the same as 100 ° index days. Sometimes conditions will be declared for only part of a day (for example from noon until 8 p.m.). On these days, most outdoor activities will occur earlier in the day and physical activity will be limited during the afternoon.

### Specific Guidelines for Prosper Summer Camp Instructors

Heat index of 95-99	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mandatory water breaks every 30 minutes</li><li>• Unlimited access to drinking water at all times</li><li>• Monitor program participants carefully for signs of over-heating and/or dehydration</li></ul>
Heat index of 100-104	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mandatory water breaks a minimum of every 30 minutes</li><li>• Unlimited access to drinking water at all times</li><li>• Monitor program participants carefully for signs of over-heating and/or dehydration</li></ul>
Heat index of 106-110	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mandatory water breaks every 30 minutes</li><li>• Unlimited access to drinking water at all times</li><li>• Outside activities not to exceed 2 hours</li></ul>
Heat index of 111+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stop all outdoor activities</li></ul>

## **General Information for Outdoor Safety in the Texas Heat**

**Wear appropriate clothing.** Clothing helps to prevent the transfer of heat from the air to the body. In most cases, the best choice is to wear lightweight (like cotton), loose-fitting, light-colored clothing and a hat with a wide brim to protect the face and neck.

**Drink 1/2 cup to 1 cup of cool water every 15 to 20 minutes.** For activities longer than 1 hour in duration, an electrolyte-containing sports drink may be preferred to replace lost nutrients. To prevent dehydration, it is crucial that the water intake during the activity be about equal to sweat loss. Do not rely on thirst as a measure of the need for fluid. An adult may produce 2 to 3 gallons of sweat over the course of a day. It is also encouraged to drink liquids 30 minutes before going outside. Avoid alcohol, caffeine, and sugary drinks.

**Find cool rest areas.** Shaded or air-conditioned areas with cooler temperatures are preferable. The rest area should be as close to the recreation area as possible.

**Check your child's health.** It is encouraged to have knowledge of your child's medical history and have completed a recent physical examination before entering an outdoor program. If your child has a history of heat stroke or difficulty participating in outdoor activities due to the heat, it is recommended to join our programs during the cooler times of the year.

**Use sunscreen.** Apply sunscreen with an SPF 15 or greater. Reapply as needed especially with activities that involve a lot of sweating.

**Acclimatize Gradually.** It is encouraged to acclimate to the warmer weather before joining an outdoor program. Start by increasing your time doing outside activities like walking, gardening, or riding a bike.

## **General Information about Heat Related Illness**

Heat-related illnesses are common occurrences in our hot, humid Texas summers and come in various forms, including minor inconveniences, such as a sunburn or rash, but can progress into something much more significant, such as heat stroke. Severe heat illnesses occur when the body cannot get rid of excess heat, causing core temperatures to rise and the heart rate to increase. With proper education and preparation, heat-related illnesses and deaths are preventable.

Excessive exposure to a hot environment, especially while active or working, can bring about a variety of heat-induced disorders, which can be very serious.

### **Signs and Symptoms of Heat Illness:**

- Dizziness or headache
- Fatigue, weakness
- Cramping
- Damp, pale, or clammy skin
- Sweating stops, redness of skin
- Confusion
- Vomiting

### Personal Risk Factors for Heat Illness:

- Lifestyle - caffeine drinkers, alcohol consumption, and fitness level.
- Body Size - carrying excess weight affects the body's regulation of temperature.
- Age - young people and older adults do not adjust as well to temperature changes.
- Illnesses - heart disease, diabetes, and prior heat-related illness.

### Preventing Heat Illness:

- Cool water is best for optimal hydration. It is important not to overconsume sports drinks.
- Be sure to get adequate sleep and nutrition.
- Take breaks to allow time to acclimate to the weather and watch out for each other.
- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting, and ventilated clothing.
- Educate employees to know the signs of heat exhaustion.
- Plan work for cooler times of the day and monitor conditions using a heat stress app.
- Use SPF sunscreen that blocks UVA and UVB sun rays.

**Heat rash** is likely to occur in hot and humid environments where sweat cannot be easily evaporated from the skin surface. It can be prevented by resting in a cool place and allowing the skin to dry.

**Heat cramps** are painful muscle spasms, which are caused by excessive fluid and salt loss. Such cramps can be treated by consuming fluid replacement beverages.

**Heat exhaustion** occurs because of excess fluid loss and failure to replace the minerals and fluid lost during sweating. Signs of heat exhaustion include extreme weakness or fatigue, giddiness, nausea, or headaches. The skin is clammy and moist, and the body temperature is relatively normal. The best treatment for heat exhaustion involves resting in a cool place and drinking plenty of fluids.

Symptoms may include:

- Dizziness/feeling faint
- Headache
- Nausea
- Profuse sweating
- Clammy/cool skin
- Rapid/weak pulse
- Body temperature at or below normal
- Low grade fever
- Low blood pressure
- Ashen/pale appearance.

If left unattended, heat exhaustion can result in more disabling and deadly **heat stroke**. A heat stroke occurs when the body is unable to regulate its temperature and cool down. Body temperature may rise to 106 °F or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. Warning signs vary, but may include:

- An extremely high body temperature (above 103 °F, orally)
- Red, hot, and dry skin
- No sweating

- Rapid, strong pulse or heartbeat
- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Elevated or lowered breathing
- Throbbing headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Confusion
- Irritability
- Unconsciousness.

References:

<https://www.uiltexas.org/health/info/heat-stress-and-athletic-participation>

<https://www.weather.gov/ict/wbgt>