Emergency Management and
Public Safety Section
Parks Advisory Board Meeting
August 7, 2026

Summer Sun Safety



Extreme Heat Awareness in Parks

Extreme hot weather occurs when temperatures rise well above the normal range and remain elevated for an extended period. In Broward County parks, this often means high humidity, limited airflow, and intense sun exposure that place serious stress on staff, visitors, and natural resources. Recognizing the difference between ordinary heat and extreme heat helps us adjust programs, protect our teams, and keep our parks safe and welcoming.

WHAT EXTREME HEAT MEANS FOR PARKS

- High Temperatures
- High Humidity
- Limited Airflow
- Intense Sun Exposure
- Impact on Staff & Visitors

WHAT EXTREME HEAT MEANS FOR PARKS

High Temperatures

High Humidity

Limited Airflow

When high temperatures combine with humidity and limited airflow, heat builds quickly across park surfaces and shaded areas alike. These conditions make it harder for the body to cool down, increasing the risk of heat stress for staff and visitors. Awareness and proactive planning help keep our parks safe and comfortable.

WHAT EXTREME HEAT MEANS FOR PARKS

Intense Sun Exposure

Impact on Staff and Visitors

Intense sun exposure increases UV risk and accelerates dehydration across open park areas. Staff working outdoors and visitors participating in recreation are especially vulnerable during midday hours. Continuous exposure without shade or hydration can lead to fatigue, sunburn, and heat-related illness, making prevention and awareness essential for safe park operations.

WARNING SIGNS OF DANGEROUS HEAT

When temperatures soar, early warning signs often appear during routine park activities. Heavy sweating, dizziness, nausea, and fatigue can signal heat exhaustion, while confusion or dry, hot skin may indicate heat stroke. Staff should watch for these symptoms in themselves and visitors, especially during midday programs or maintenance work.

HEALTH IMPACTS OF HOT WEATHER

Extreme heat affects more than comfort — it strains the heart, lungs, and hydration balance. In parks, prolonged exposure can lead to dehydration, muscle cramps, and serious heat-related illness. Recognizing how heat impacts the body helps staff adjust workloads and ensure visitors stay safe while enjoying outdoor spaces.



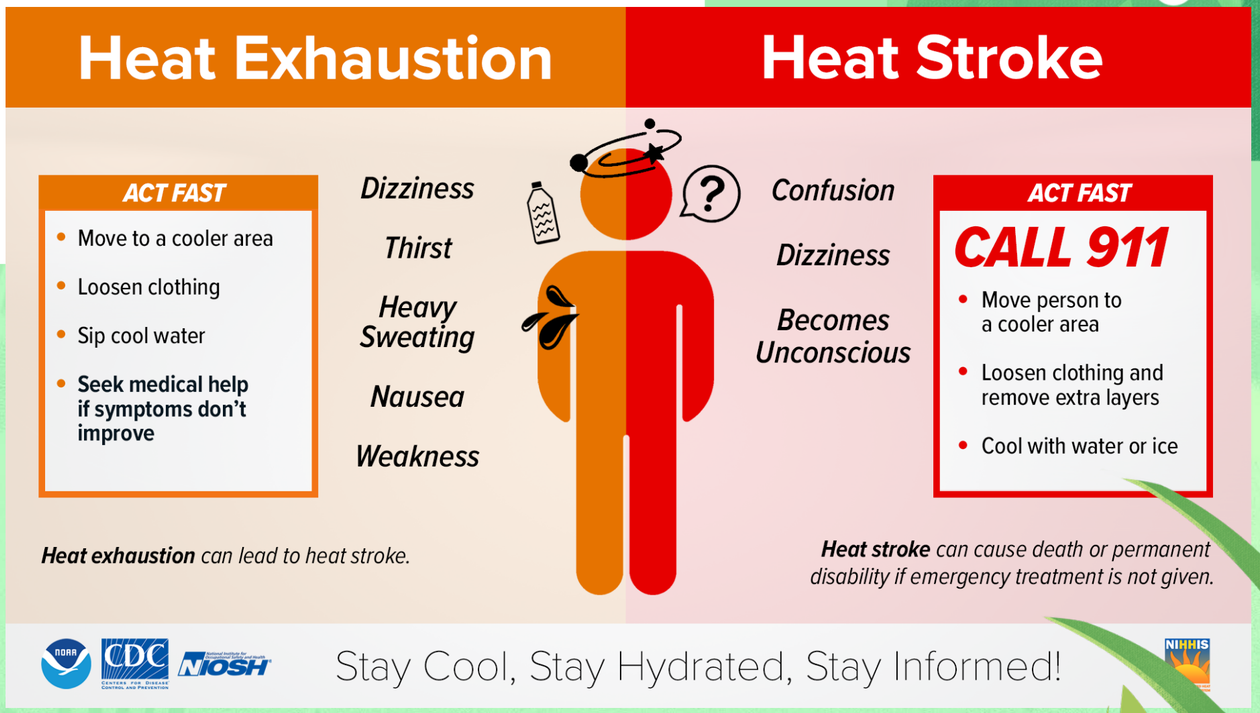
- HEAT EXHAUSTION
- HEAT STROKE
- DEHYDRATION

Heat-Related Conditions

Dehydration — Not enough fluids; causes cramps, headache, and tiredness. Encourage frequent water breaks.

Heat Exhaustion — Heavy sweating, dizziness, and fatigue after long exposure. Cool down, hydrate, and rest.

Heat Stroke — Body overheats (104°F+), confusion, hot dry skin.
Medical emergency — call 911.



EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF HEAT STRESS

Heat Cramps

Heat cramps may be the first sign of heat-related illness and may lead to heat exhaustion or stroke.

Symptoms: Painful muscle cramps and spasms usually in legs and abdomen. Heavy sweating.

First Aid: Apply firm pressure on cramping muscles or gently massage to relieve spasm. Give sips of water unless the person complains of nausea, then stop giving water.

Seek immediate medical attention if cramps last longer than 1 hour.





HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

STAY WELL HYDRATED

DRESS APPROPRIATELY

APPLY SUNSCREEN

Prevention starts with preparation. Drink water frequently, wear light clothing, apply sunscreen, and take breaks in shaded or air-conditioned areas. Parks can support safety by providing refill stations, shaded seating, and reminders to rest and rehydrate. Simple habits keep both staff and visitors healthy through the hottest days.

Staying Safe in Our Parks

- Extreme heat is preventable — awareness and preparation reduce risks.
- Know the signs — early recognition of heat stress saves lives.
- Protect yourself — hydration, shade, sunscreen, and rest are essential.
- Park readiness matters — staff protocols, signage, and visitor messaging keep our spaces safe.
- Together we ensure Broward parks remain welcoming, healthy, and resilient through the hottest days.


Thank you!