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Wisconsin Heat Awareness Day June 13, 2013

(MADISON) – Heat can kill. That’s why Iowa County Emergency Management, Wisconsin Emergency Management and the National Weather Service are reminding people of the dangers associated with extreme heat and to promote community safety and health.

In 2012, Wisconsin had confirmed 24 heat related deaths, most occurred during five days of Excessive Heat Warnings from July 2-6. The heat index rose to 105 F degrees for 48 hours with night time lows of 75 F. It was the second hottest and third longest heat wave in Wisconsin. None of the victims had air conditioning and did not seek shelter at one of the many cooling centers which opened around the state.

In 2011, excessive heat claimed five lives and injured more than 100 people in Wisconsin during the July 17-21 heat wave. Once again none of those victims had air conditioning. The combination of the warm temperatures and high humidity caused the heat index to rise between 100 F and 117 F degrees.

In 1995, two major killer heat waves affected most of Wisconsin resulting in 154 heat-related deaths and over 300 heat-related illnesses.

Summer heat waves have been the biggest weather-related killers in Wisconsin for the past 50 years, far exceeding tornadoes, severe storms and floods combined. Heat is the number one weather-related killer in the United States. People at higher risk of a heat-related illness include:

- Older adults
- Infants and young children
- People with chronic heart or lung problems
- People with disabilities
- Overweight persons
- Those who work outdoors or in hot settings
- Users of some medications, especially those taken for mental disorders, movement disorder, allergies, depression, and heart or circulatory problems
- People who are socially isolated and don’t know when or how to cool off – or when to call for help

Tips to keep safe in hot weather:

1. **Never leave children, disabled persons, or pets in a parked car – even briefly.** Temperatures in a car can become life threatening within minutes. On an 80-degree day with sunshine, the temperature inside a car even with the windows cracked slightly can rise 20 to 30 degrees above the outside temperature in 10 to 20 minutes. There have been cases where the inside temperature rose 40 degrees! Additional information at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/heat/index.shtml>
2. **Keep your living space cool.** If you have an air conditioner, use it. Cover windows to keep the sun from shining in. If you don't have an air conditioner you should consider going to a community cooling center. If you stay at home, open windows to let air circulate. At extreme high temperatures, a fan loses its ability to effectively reduce heat-related illness. When it's hotter than 95 degrees use fans to blow hot air out of the window rather than to blow hot air on your body.
3. **Slow down and limit physical activity.** Plan outings or exertion for the early morning or after dark when temperatures are cooler.
4. **Drink plenty of water and eat lightly.** Don't wait for thirst, but instead drink plenty of water throughout the day. Avoid alcohol or caffeine and stay away from hot, heavy meals.
5. **Wear lightweight, loose-fitting, light-colored clothing.** Add a hat or umbrella to keep your head cool...and don't forget sunscreen!
6. **Don't stop taking medication unless your doctor says you should.** Take extra care to stay cool and ask your doctor or pharmacist for any special heat advice.
7. **Taking a cool shower or bath will cool you down.** A shower or bath will actually work faster than an air conditioner. Applying cold wet rags to the neck, head and limbs also cools down the body quickly.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS AND WHAT TO DO

- *Heat Cramps* - cramps or muscle spasms in the abdomen, arms or legs.

Solution: Stop activity. Cool down, drink clear juice or sports drink.

- *Heat Exhaustion* - heavy sweating, paleness, muscle cramps, weakness, dizziness, headache, nausea, fainting.

Solution: Cool down, seek medical attention.

- *Heat Stroke* - extremely high body temperature, red, hot, dry skin, rapid pulse, throbbing headache, dizziness, nausea, confusion, unconsciousness.

Solution: Call 911 and cool the victim with shower or hose until help arrives.

(Courtesy: Wisconsin Department of Health Services)

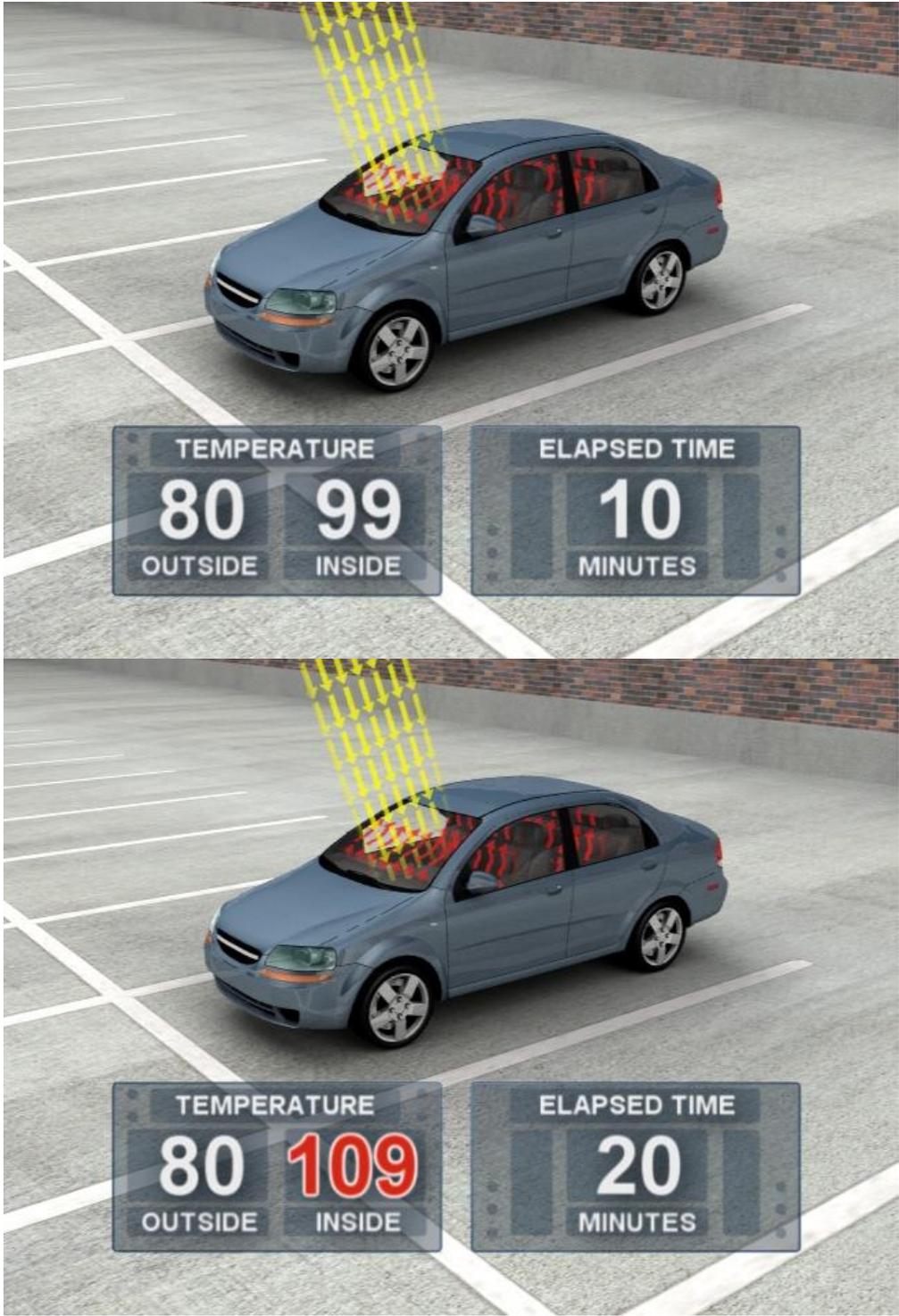
For more information, visit <http://readywisconsin.wi.gov> and click on our Heat Awareness section.



National Weather Service Heat Wave Program in Wisconsin

1. **Outlook Statement** – Issued daily to highlight potential hazardous weather in the next 1 to 7 days. Periods when Heat Index will equal or exceed 95 are mentioned (could lead to Heat Advisory or Excessive Heat Warning conditions). Issued as a Hazardous Weather Outlook (HWO). Broadcasted on NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards, and posted on NWS web sites (www.weather.gov).
2. **Heat Advisory** – Issued 6 to 36 hours in advance of a daytime period in which daytime heat index (HI) values of 100 degrees or more are expected. Additionally if daytime HI values are expected to be 95 to 99 degrees for four consecutive days or more an Advisory should be issued.
3. **Excessive Heat Watch** – Issued generally 12 to 48 hours in advance of Excessive Heat Warning conditions are expected.
4. **Excessive Heat Warning** – Issued 6 to 36 hours in advance of any occurrence of a 48-hour period in which daytime heat index (HI) values are expected to be 105 degrees or higher and nighttime HI values will be 75 degrees or higher. Additionally, if four consecutive days of daytime HI values of 100 to 104 are expected, an Excessive Heat Warning will be issued.

For additional information about heat awareness, contact your local public health department, county emergency management director or the National Weather Service.



(Graphic Courtesy of General Motors and Golden Gate Weather Services)

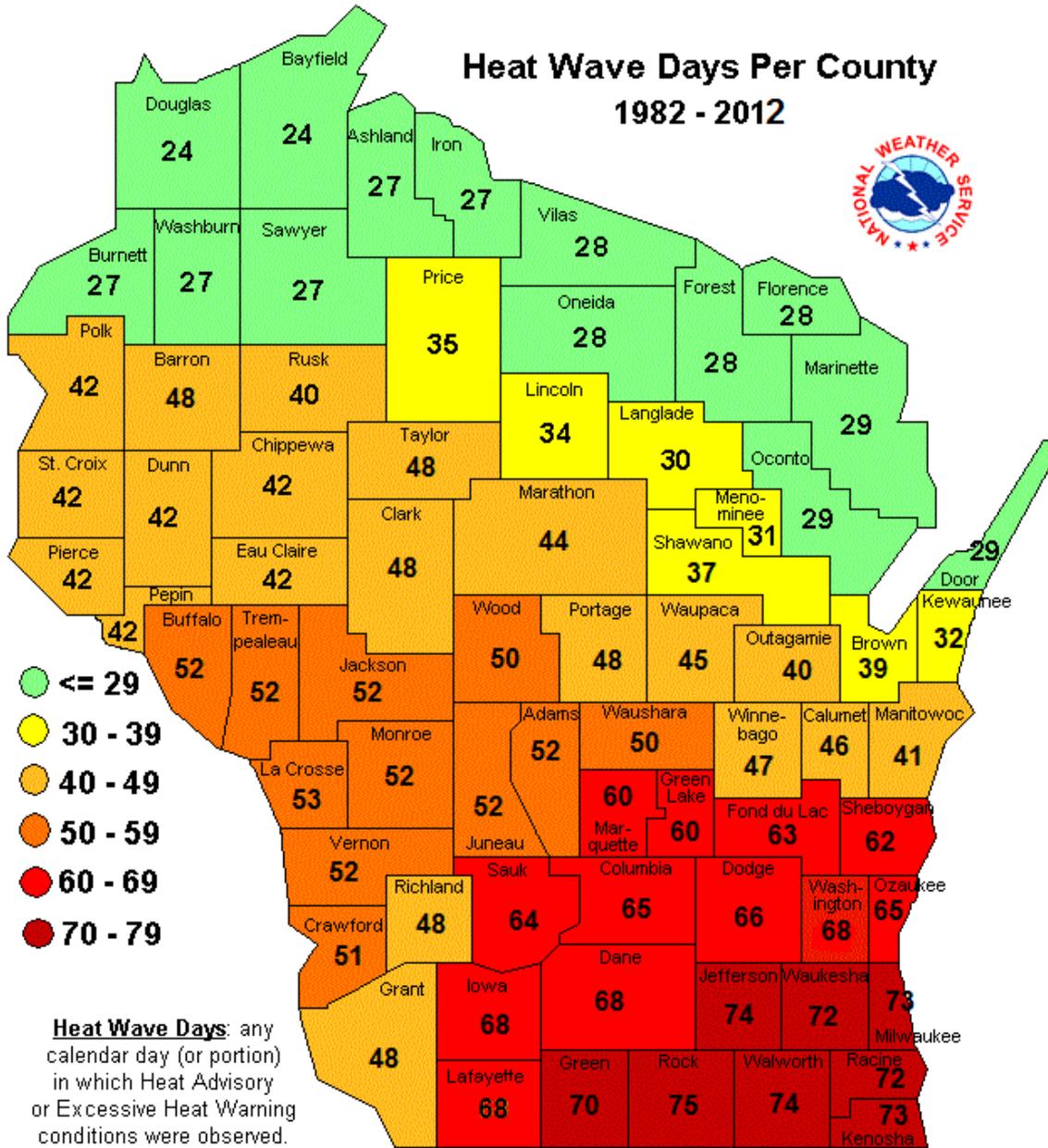
Wisconsin Heat-Related (Direct and Indirect) Fatalities

Year of Death	# Fatalities
2000	1
2001	24
2002	8
2003	9
2004	4
2005	12
2006	10
2007	5
2008	1
2009	8
2010	9
2011	5
2012	24

(From Wisconsin Department of Health Services)

Note: Numbers in table are totals of directly and indirectly-related heat fatalities. If heat was the primary cause of death it is a directly-related heat death. If heat was a secondary or contributing cause of death it is an indirectly-related heat death.

Heat Wave Days Per County 1982 - 2012



Heat Wave Deaths Per County 1982 - 2012

Total=137

