



ABBOTSFORD EMERGENCY PROGRAM

Extreme Heat

Visit abbotsford.ca/emergencyguides to learn more.



SCAN CODE
FOR ACCESS



ABBOTSFORD EMERGENCY PROGRAM
604-853-3566 | epo@abbotsford.ca
abbotsford.ca/emergency





Know the Risks

Follow these five steps to protect yourself and your family in very hot weather:

- 1 Prepare for the heat
- 2 Pay close attention to how you and those around you feel
- 3 Stay hydrated
- 4 Stay cool
- 5 Avoid exposure to extreme heat when outdoors

1 PREPARE FOR THE HEAT

Tune in regularly to local weather forecasts and alerts so you know when to take extra care.

Arrange for regular visits by family members, neighbours or friends during very hot days in case you need help. Visitors can help identify signs of heat illness that could be missed over the phone.

Find ways to keep cool before the hot weather starts. If you have an air conditioner, make sure it works properly. If you have ceiling fans or other fans they can help as long as the humidity isn't high. Find an air-conditioned spot close by where you can cool off for a few hours on very hot days. This will help you cope with the heat.

Have cool drinks in your vehicle and keep your gas tank topped up.

2 PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO HOW YOU AND THOSE AROUND YOU FEEL

Heat Stroke is a medical emergency! Call 911 or your local emergency number immediately if you are caring for someone who has a high body temperature and is either unconscious, confused or has stopped sweating.

Watch for symptoms of heat illness, which include:

- dizziness or fainting
- nausea or vomiting
- headache
- rapid breathing and heartbeat
- extreme thirst (dry mouth or sticky saliva)
- decreased urination with unusually dark yellow urine
- changes of behaviour in children (like sleepiness or temper tantrums)

If you have any of these symptoms during extreme heat, move to a cool place and drink liquids right away. Water is best.

While waiting for help - **cool the person right away by:**

- moving them to a cool place, if you can
- applying cold water to large areas of their skin or clothing
- fanning the person as much as possible

3 STAY HYDRATED

Drink plenty of cool liquids (especially water) **before you feel thirsty** to decrease your risk of dehydration (not having enough fluids in your body). Thirst is not a good indicator of dehydration.

- Remind yourself to drink water by leaving a glass by the sink.
- Flavouring water with natural fruit juice may make it more appealing.
- Eat more fruits and vegetables as they have a high water content.
- If you eat less, you may need to drink more water.
- Drink water before, during and after physical activity.

4 STAY COOL

Did you know? Your body is not used to (not acclimatized to) extreme heat at the beginning of the summer. If you are physically active, you are also not acclimatized if you don't exercise regularly during hot weather.

Dress for the weather.

- Wear loose-fitting, light-coloured clothing and a wide-brimmed hat made of breathable fabric.
- When you buy sunglasses, make sure they provide protection against both UVA and UVB rays.

Take a break from the heat.

- If you must do physical activity in extreme heat, take extra breaks, remove gear to let your body cool off and drink lots of water. Don't expect your usual performance in hot weather. Give your body time to recover after being in the heat.

Keep your home cool.

- Make meals that don't need to be cooked in an oven.
- Block the sun by closing awnings, curtains or blinds during the day.
- If safe, open your windows at night to let cooler air into your home.
- If you have an air conditioner with a thermostat, keep it set to the highest setting that is comfortable (somewhere between 22°C/72°F and 26°C/79°F). This will reduce your energy costs and provide you with needed relief. If you are using a window air conditioner, cool only one room where you can go for heat relief.

If your home is extremely hot.

- Take cool showers or baths until you feel refreshed.
- Use a fan to help you stay cool and aim the air flow in your direction.
- Spend a few hours in a cool place. It could be a tree-shaded area, swimming facility or an air-conditioned spot like a shopping mall, grocery store, or public library.

5 AVOID EXPOSURE TO EXTREME HEAT WHEN OUTDOORS

Did you know? Sunburned skin loses its sweating efficiency. This makes it harder for your body to regulate its temperature.

Never leave people or pets inside a parked vehicle or in direct sunlight.

- When the outside air temperature is 23°C/73°F, the temperature inside a vehicle can be extremely dangerous - more than 50°C/122°F.

Reschedule or plan outdoor activities during cooler parts of the day.

- Before heading out, check the Air Quality Health Index in your area, if available. Air pollution tends to be at higher levels during very hot days.
- Plan strenuous outdoor activities for cooler days, or choose a cooler location like a place with air conditioning or with tree shade.

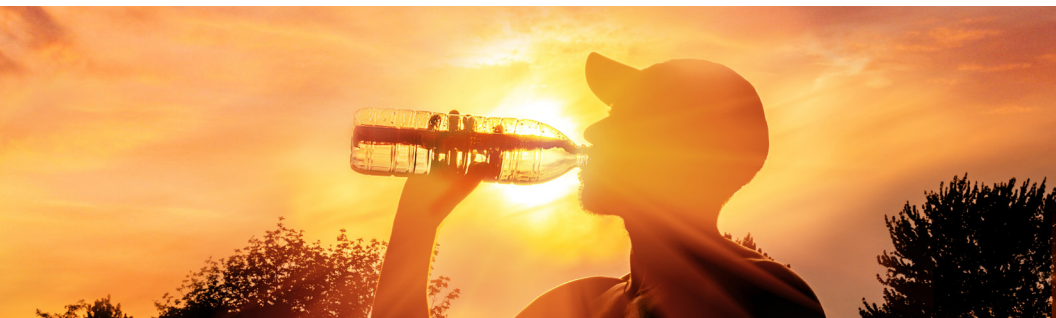
Avoid sun exposure. Find or bring shade when possible.

- Tree-shaded areas can be as much as 5°C/9°F cooler than the surrounding area.
- Shade yourself by wearing a wide-brimmed, breathable hat, or using an umbrella.
- Wear loose-fitting, light-coloured clothing made of breathable fabric.
- Wear sunglasses that have UVA and UVB protection.
- Use a sunscreen with sun protection factor (SPF) 15 or higher and follow the manufacturer's directions. Don't use sunscreen on a child less than 6 months old.

The likelihood that you and your family will recover from an emergency tomorrow often depends on the planning and preparation done today.

While each person's abilities and needs are unique, every individual can take steps to prepare for all kinds of emergencies from fires and floods to earthquakes. By evaluating your own personal needs and making an emergency plan that fits those needs, you and your loved ones can be better prepared.

Get Ready Now.



Abbotsford Emergency Program

Abbotsford Fire Rescue Service
32270 George Ferguson Way, Abbotsford, BC V2T 2L1
604-864-5694 | epo@abbotsford.ca

abbotsford.ca/emergency