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Press Release

NC DHHS Encourages Caution as Warmer Temperatures Arrive

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RALEIGH, N.C. - As North Carolina enters the first stretch of consecutive days of 90-degree temperatures this summer, health officials with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) are urging citizens to take extra precautions against heat-related illnesses.

"Increased temperatures affect everyone, but children, the elderly, those who work outside and those with chronic health conditions are most vulnerable to illness during the summer months," said Dr. Megan Davies, Acting State Health Director and State Epidemiologist. "Simple actions can prevent severe illnesses, trips to the emergency room and even death."

The symptoms of heat stress include muscle cramps, fatigue, weakness, dizziness, fainting, headaches, nausea and vomiting, and are easily avoidable with proper precautions.

To reduce risk of heat-related illness:

- Increase your fluid intake
- Spend some time in cool or air-conditioned environments
- Reduce normal activity levels
- Speak with your physician about how to stay safe if you take medicines that can impede heat loss such as drugs for high blood pressure, migraines, allergies, muscle spasms, mental illness and tranquilizers

In addition to these steps, Operation Fan/Heat Relief offers people who are 60 or older, or people with disabilities, the opportunity to receive one fan per year to help alleviate heat problems in their home. For more information on Operation Fan/Heat Relief, please contact your local Social Services Department.

For more information on preventing heat-related health issues, please visit:

<http://publichealth.nc.gov/chronicdiseaseandinjury/heat.htm> and
www.cdc.gov/Features/ExtremeHeat/

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