

State Emergency Service

Media Release



Government
of South Australia



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Forecast hot weather prompts warnings from State Emergency Service and SA Ambulance Service

With extreme temperatures forecast for the state for much of next week, the State Emergency Service (SES) and SA Ambulance Service (SAAS) are encouraging South Australians to think about how they are going to reduce the risk to their health during the hot weather.

SES Acting Chief Officer Dermot Barry said extreme heat has a detrimental impact on health and wellbeing, resulting in severe health issues and even death.

"One of the most effective measures people can do is consider those who are most vulnerable to the heat, including elderly relatives, friends and neighbours, and ensure they will be able to cope during the hot weather," Mr Barry said.

He said drinking plenty of fluids, wearing a broad-brimmed hat and loose-fitting clothing and staying indoors during the hottest part of the day are among some of the precautions that people can take.

"People should also consider making use of airconditioned public facilities, such as shopping centres, cinemas and libraries, to escape the heat.

"Keep in mind that, as the temperature rises, large trees may drop their branches without warning.

"Extreme heat also brings with it the risk of power outages, so people should be prepared and have a battery-powered radio and a good quality torch," Mr Barry said.

SA Ambulance Service Operations Team Leader Bryan Ward said prolonged periods of heat can exacerbate pre-existing medical conditions.

"We encourage people to start taking precautions, in preparation for the upcoming hot weather, and to check on those who may be vulnerable to the heat, such as elderly family members, neighbours and children."

"We generally tend to notice an increase in workload at around day four to five of a heat wave. SA Ambulance Service is well-practised at dealing with hot weather and has plans in place to increase ambulance resourcing should it be necessary."

"Everyone should keep out of the heat wherever possible and ensure they are adequately hydrated. We particularly want to ensure our overseas tourists are aware of the importance of water hydration and appropriate clothing during this extreme heat. We don't want you to spend your hard-earned holiday being treated by ambulance clinicians," said Mr Ward.

SA Health has fact sheets on keeping healthy in extreme heat in a number of languages, including Arabic, Tamil and Swahili. They are available from the SA Health website www.sahealth.sa.gov.au. Links to the fact sheets can also be found on the SES website www.ses.sa.gov.au.

Further information on the expected weather can be found on the Bureau of Meteorology's website at www.bom.gov.au

For media enquires telephone the SES Media Line on (08) 8211 6176

For SES response in floods or storms telephone 132 500. If the matter is life threatening telephone 000
www.ses.sa.gov.au