



STATE OF WISCONSIN \

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**For Immediate Release**

## Wisconsin's Heat Awareness Day – June 11, 2009

(MADISON) Gov. Jim Doyle has proclaimed June 11, 2009 as Heat Awareness Day in Wisconsin. The campaign is to remind people of the dangers associated with extreme heat and to encourage citizens to take protective safety measures.

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 fatalities related to tornadoes, severe thunderstorm winds, flash flooding, and lightning.

To encourage citizens to be prepared for severe heat, Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) and the National Weather Service (NWS) offer these 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 – in fact it can be 30 to 40 degrees warmer in a vehicle on a sunny day as compared to the outside air temperature!
2. **Keep your living space cool.** Cover windows to keep the sun from shining in. If you don't have an air conditioner, open windows to let air circulate. When it's hotter than 95 degrees, use fans to blow hot air out of the window, rather than to blow hot air on to your body. Basements or ground floors are often cooler than upper floors.
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, caffeine, and carbonated beverages, 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. Keep in mind that some medications prevent your body from

sweating and therefore cooling down. Consult your doctor about your medication and ask for any special heat advice.

7. **Taking a cool shower or bath will cool you down.** In fact, you will cool down faster in a cool shower or bath faster than you will in an air-conditioned room! Also, applying cold wet rags to the neck, head and limbs will cool down the body quickly.

People at higher risk of a heat related illness include:

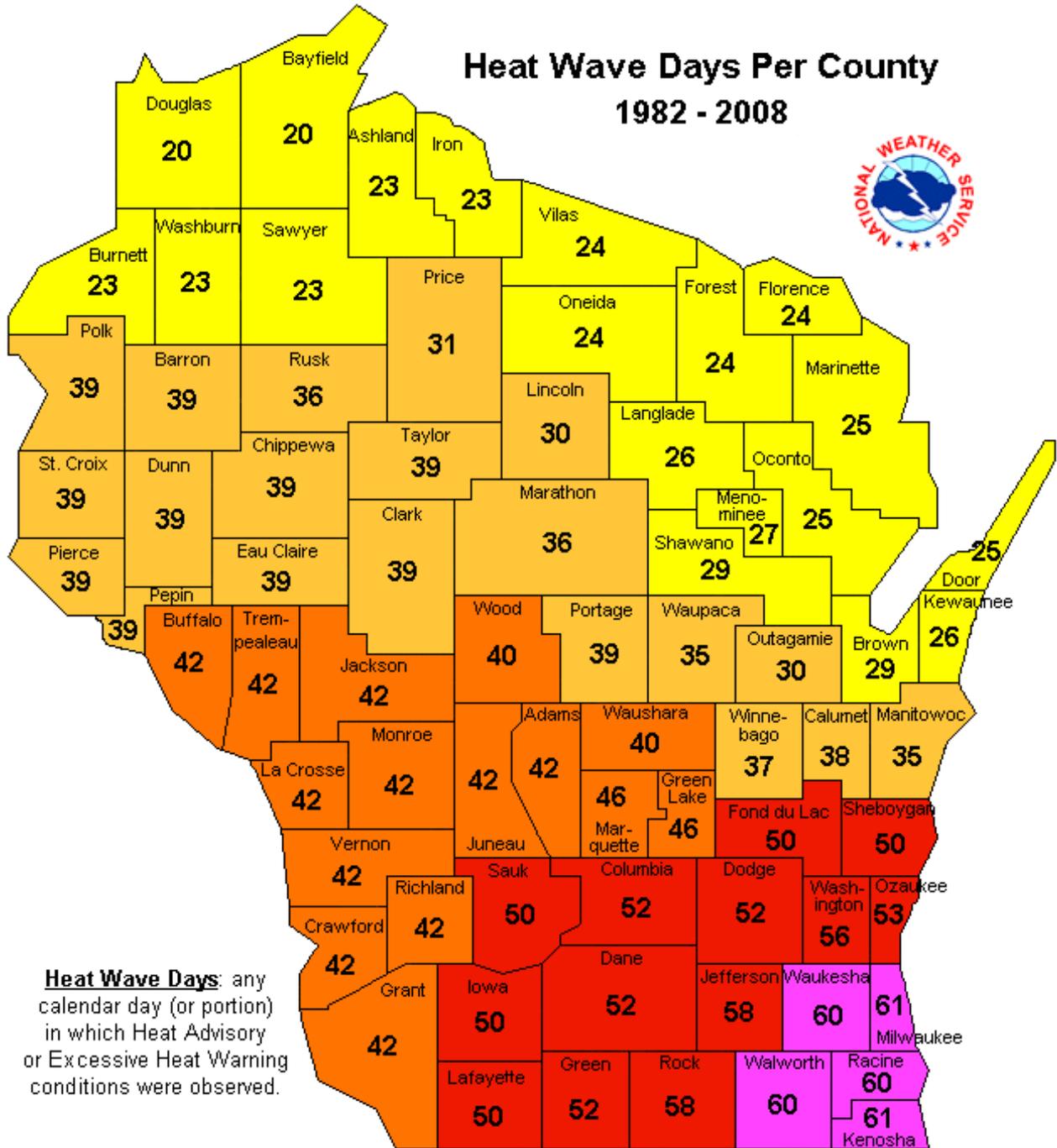
- Older adults
- Infants and young children
- People with chronic heart or lung problems
- People with disabilities
- Overweight persons
- Those who work outdoors or in hot settings
- Users of some medications, especially those taken for mental disorders, movement disorder, allergies, depression, and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

### **National Weather Service Heat Wave Program in Wisconsin**

1. **Outlook Statement** – Issued 2 to 7 days in advance of when Heat Advisory or Excessive Heat Warning conditions are anticipated. Issued as a Hazardous Weather Statement (HWO). Broadcasted on NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards, and posted on NWS web sites ([www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)).
2. **Heat Advisory** – Issued 6 to 24 hours in advance of occasions in which daytime heat index (HI) values of 100 to 104 are expected. Also, a Heat Advisory will be issued for situations in which daytime heat index (HI) values of 95 to 99 are expected for at least 4 consecutive days.
3. **Excessive Heat Watch** – Issued generally 12 to 48 hours in advance of occasions in which daytime heat index (HI) values are expected to be 105 or higher and night time HI values will be 75 or higher for at least a 48-hour period.
4. **Excessive Heat Warning** – Issued 6 to 24 hours in advance of occasions in which daytime heat index (HI) values are expected to be 105 or higher and night time HI values will be 75 or higher for at least a 48-hour period. Also, an Excessive Heat Warning will be issued for situations in which daytime heat index values will be 100 to 104 for at least 4 consecutive days.

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

# Heat Wave Days Per County 1982 - 2008



**Heat Wave Days:** any calendar day (or portion) in which Heat Advisory or Excessive Heat Warning conditions were observed.