

Tool Kit: “Together, we stay vigilant”

# EXTREME HEAT AWARENESS

**For community organizations  
and front-line workers**



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## Notice to readers!

This extreme heat toolkit was developed by members of the community development support team, in collaboration with several community partner organizations. It is a compilation of information, resources, and practical tools designed to support community organizations and field workers in their efforts to prevent, raise awareness, intervene, and follow up with people in vulnerable situations.

If you have any suggestions, modifications, or additions that could help improve it, please feel free to write us at the following address: [soutien.organismescommunautaires.comtl@ssss.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:soutien.organismescommunautaires.comtl@ssss.gouv.qc.ca).



## INTRODUCTION

### Why have we created this toolkit?

Heat waves are becoming more intense and more frequent, posing a serious threat to public health. Certain groups are particularly at risk, namely:

- Seniors,
- People experiencing homelessness,
- People living with a mental health condition or addiction,
- Pregnant women,
- Infants and young children,
- People with chronic illnesses.

This toolkit is intended to support community organizations and frontline workers with their prevention, awareness, intervention, and follow-up efforts during periods of oppressive or extreme heat. It contains tangible tools and strategies that are adapted to working with populations at risk **before, during, and after** a heat wave.

As such, it focuses on the strategic role of local stakeholders and professionals whose front-line knowledge and close ties to the community make them key partners. In times of extreme heat, their ability to convey preventive messages, spot at-risk situations, and provide local support to those most at risk is paramount.

### The Objectives of This Toolkit

- Increase community preparedness for heat waves by providing information and creating awareness.
- Provide practical and accessible resources for supporting at-risk populations.
- Encourage clear, helpful, and reassuring communication between at-risk populations and caseworkers.





## DEFINITIONS OF HEAT AND ASSOCIATED RISKS

### Oppressive heat, extreme heat, heat wave, *canicule*: what's the difference?

TERM	PRIMARY DEFINITION	DURATION	HEALTH RISKS
<b>Oppressive Heat</b> <i>Environment Canada may issue an official alert.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temperature reaching <math>\geq 30\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}</math>+ a humidex of <math>\geq 40\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}</math></li> <li>• Primary effects: significant discomfort, increased risk for vulnerable people.</li> </ul>	Brief	Moderate
<b>Extreme Heat</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three or more days with an average daytime temperature of <math>\geq 33\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}</math> and an overnight temperature that remains above <math>20\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}</math></li> <li>OR</li> <li>• Two consecutive nights with a temperature <math>\geq 25\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}</math></li> <li>• Effects: The health of people at risk can get worse quickly. This can cause serious complications, including death, if no action is taken.</li> </ul>	Prolonged	High
<b>Heat wave</b> <i>Used primarily in media and meteorological contexts.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A generic term that means a <b>prolonged period of unusually high</b> heat, often above seasonal norms, that can include periods of overwhelming or extreme heat.</li> <li>• <b>Effects:</b> Can significantly affect health, infrastructures, and the environment.</li> </ul>	Variable	Variable

Source: Risk Management Plan—Overwhelming or Extreme Heat—COMTL





## Risks posed by heat: effects on health, the community, and aggravating factors

CATEGORY	CONTENT
<b>Signs and symptoms to watch for</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unusual fatigue</li> <li>• Nausea or vomiting</li> <li>• Dizziness, headache</li> <li>• Confusion, disorientation</li> <li>• Rapid breathing or increased heart rate</li> <li>• Intense thirst, generalized discomfort</li> </ul>
<b>Impact on Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct effects:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- heat stroke</li> <li>- dehydration</li> <li>- cramps and heat exhaustion</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Indirect effects:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aggravation of chronic conditions (cardiac, respiratory, etc.)</li> <li>- ↑ psychological and behavioural issues</li> <li>- ↓ cognitive performance</li> <li>- ↓ outdoor activities</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Broader consequences:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ↑ Calls to Info-Santé</li> <li>- ↑ Ambulance services</li> <li>- ↑ Referrals for medical consultations</li> <li>- ↑ Hospitalizations</li> <li>- ↑ Deaths</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Impacts on community organizations:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased demand for services (more requests for assistance and support from people at risk)</li> <li>- Impact on staff and volunteers (fatigue, heat-related health risks)</li> <li>- Limited availability of services and activities due to inadequate infrastructures (rooms lacking air conditioning or proper ventilation, difficulty keeping food and products cool, exterior facilities without access to water, etc.)</li> <li>- Modified services and activities (moving activities to the morning or evening, cancellations, rescheduling)</li> <li>- Increased need for communication and awareness (sharing information on preventive measures, calls or check-in visits)</li> <li>(See Appendices B and C)</li> <li>- Added costs (unplanned demand for human or material resources)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Aggravating Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A residence that is poorly ventilated or lacks air conditioning</li> <li>• Medications that affect body temperature regulation or the perception of thirst</li> <li>• Reduced ability to notice or react to heat (seniors, young children, people who are isolated)</li> <li>• Chronic medical conditions (heart disease, respiratory and mental health issues, etc.)</li> <li>• Low income or unstable living situations that can make it difficult to get the things needed to stay safe.</li> <li>• Language or cultural barriers that prevent access to information or services</li> <li>• Social isolation or lack of support network</li> <li>• Physical or mental disability that can make it harder to take protective measures.</li> <li>• Workers exposed to heat (outdoor work, community caseworkers, etc.)</li> </ul>

Sources : Évaluation de la vulnérabilité de l'agglomération de Montréal aux changements climatiques; Rapport 2024 US EPA (2023); Wargocki et al (2019)

In **summary**, periods of **intense heat** can have **serious health consequences**, particularly for people at risk (see Appendix A). It's important to recognize the warning signs and react quickly.



## Recognizing the Warning Signs of Heat Exposure

### Heat stroke:

- Dizziness
- Confusion
- Hot, dry skin
- Lack of perspiration

### Dehydration:

- Excessive perspiration
- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Dry mouth

## What should I do?

- Call Info-Santé (8-1-1) as soon as these symptoms appear.
- If symptoms include fever, loss of consciousness or fainting, call 9-1-1 immediately.

For more information, see: [Health effects of heat](#)





## PREPARING FOR A HEAT WAVE

**A prevention checklist for heat waves to help organize an efficient response and ensure the best possible service to those who are most at risk.**

(Community organizations/frontline workers) (TO PRINT)

### Preparing BEFORE a heat wave

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**Objective:** Anticipate needs and mobilize resources

#### Planning and coordination

- Create an action plan for heat (internal connections + partners)
- Identify people at risk (people who are isolated, seniors, ill, experiencing homelessness)
- Update contact lists (beneficiaries, informal caregivers, local resources)
- Prepare tools for follow-up (call grids, reports, log books)

#### Materials and resources

- Prepare heat bags: water bottles, hats, wipes, fans, etc.
- Check the availability of spray bottles, coolers, and portable fans
- Map out accessible places to cool off (libraries, community centres, etc.)
- Create or print instructional materials (posters, checklists)

#### Communications

- Inform teams and volunteers (quick training if needed)
- Publish prevention messages to target audiences (social media, posters, door-to-door) (See Appendices B, C, D)
- Organize preparatory workshops or activity themes (See Appendices F, G, H, I, J)

### Interventions DURING a heat wave

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**Objective:** Work to reduce the effects and support those who are most at risk

#### Checking on People at Risk

- Make check-in calls or do home visits
- Check on their health, the indoor temperature, and hydration
- Offer to take them to a cool location if needed

#### Distribution and Support

- Distribute heat bags or prevention materials
- Offer water, hydrating snacks, or fruits with high water content
- Accompany them to an air-conditioned location or organize cooling sites

#### Observations and documentation

- Make note of incidents, needs expressed, and actions taken
- Spot critical or urgent situations (isolation, discomfort, inadequate housing conditions, etc.) to ensure the information is quickly escalated and an adequate response to the needs of people at risk.



## Assessment AFTER a heat wave

**Objective:** Learn from experience to improve future interventions

### Review and Feedback

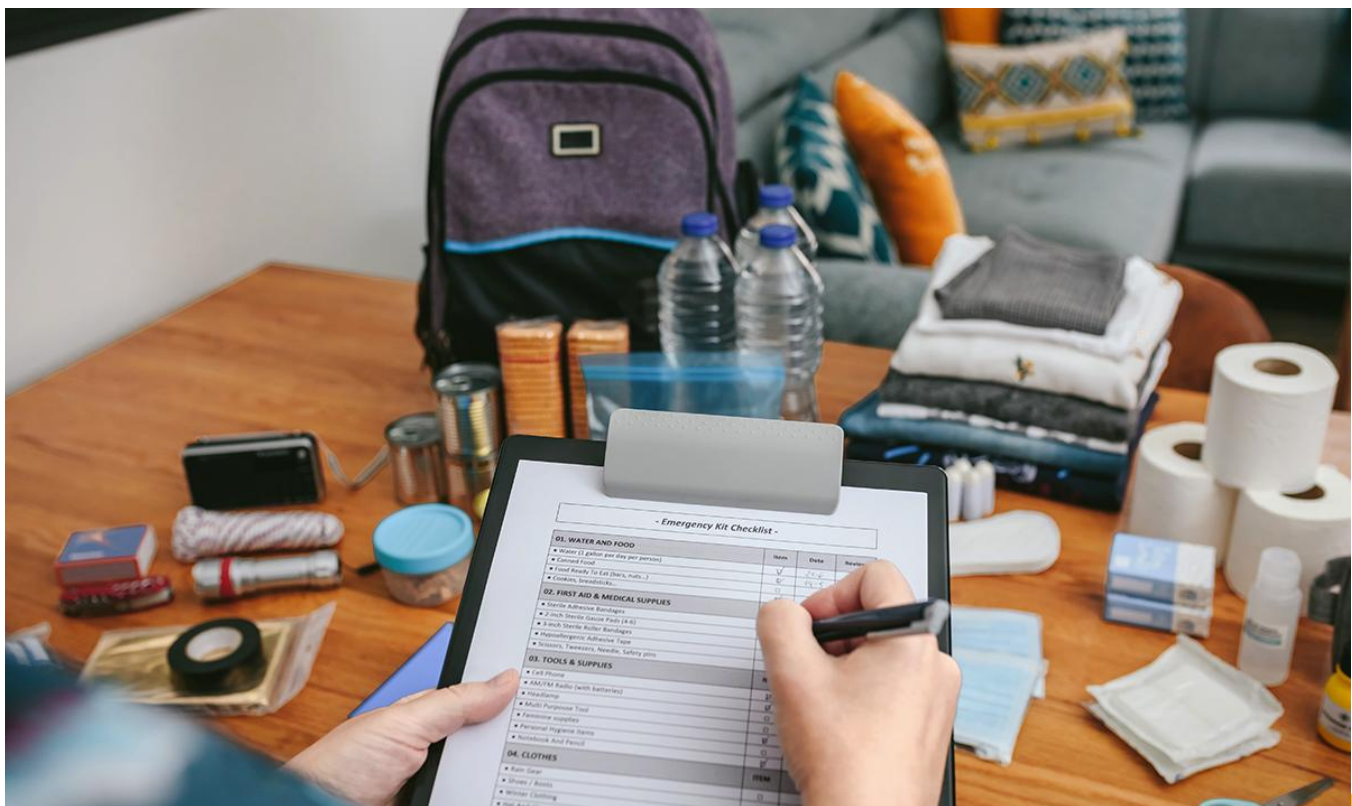
- Compile the data: number of people reached, types of interventions
- Analyze recurrent needs
- Gather responses from participants and caseworkers (feedback form)

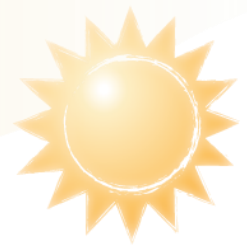
### Final report

- Write a summary report (activities, findings, recommendations)
- Share the results with partners, donors, and the community

### Continuous Improvement

- Adapt tools, messages, and intervention methods
- Update list of people who are at risk and contingency plans
- Meet with all partner groups to review the past season, identify areas for improvement, and explore ways to strengthen collaboration for the coming year.





## Follow-up and Assessment

Regularly meet with partner groups to review what has been done, assess what is working, identify ongoing needs, and plan how to improve future efforts. There are several tools that can be used for this:

### A. Intervention Tracking Grid

**Objective:** Ensure consistent follow-up with the individuals contacted and the activities carried out on the ground.

Recommended format:

Name	Address	Telephone	Date of call or visit	Type of activity carried out	Needs identified	Follow-up to plan

*This table helps organize the team's work and identify situations that need special attention.*

### B. Field logbook—Frontline observations

**Objective:** Record observations, incidents, and insights that emerged during the interventions.

**Sample entry:**

**Date:** July 17, 2025

**Time:** 2:00 p.m.

**Where:** HLM des Aînés, rue Cartier

**Met with:** Mr. Lemoine, Ms. Tremblay

**Information or needs expressed:**

- Mr. Lemoine says his apartment is too hot even though he has a fan.
- Ms. Tremblay would like a second cooling blanket.

**Responses provided or actions taken:** Made note to deliver another blanket. Alerted the technical team to check on the indoor temperature.

*Useful tool for improving feedback and adapting intervention methods.*



### C. Feedback form (participants and caseworkers)

**Objective:** Gather impressions, suggestions, and observed impacts of the actions taken.

#### Sample questions for the form (participants):

1. What did you most appreciate about this activity?  
*Ex.: Human contact, practical advice*
2. What could we do better next time?  
*Ex.: More information on resources available in an emergency.*
3. Did this activity help you feel more prepared for a heat wave?  
 Yes       No       A bit

#### Sample questions for the form (caseworkers)

1. What actions do you feel were most effective?
2. What challenges did you face?
3. What recommendations do you have for the next heat wave?

*The responses will help adapt the content and methods to reflect frontline realities.*

### D. Template for End-of-Season Report (see Appendix E)

**Objective:** Review the actions taken and the results achieved.

#### Recommended content:

- Number of people reached
- Details of activities carried out
- Findings and lessons learned
- Recommendations for the following year

*This report can be shared with partners, donors, and decision makers to support ongoing efforts and strengthen future initiatives.*

## TOOLS FOR EXTREME HEAT AWARENESS

Target Audience	TOOL/FORMAT	AVAILABLE LANGUAGE	PRIORITY
General/At-risk Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Heat-related advice</a>—poster and brochure (French only) <a href="#">pamphlet</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">What to do when it's very hot</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Preparing for Extreme Heat</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">It's really hot!</a> (pamphlet) (French only)</li> <li>• <a href="#">It's really hot!</a> (pamphlet) and (<a href="#">digital poster</a>-french only)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Heat wave prevention information sheet</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Simplified tool</a> (French only)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Pamphlet available in multiple languages: English, Arabic, Bengali, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, Farsi, Greek, Haitian Creole, Hindi, Italian, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Tagalog, Tamil, Vietnamese and Yiddish.</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Poster translated into: Arabic, Bengali, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, Farsi, Greek, Haitian Creole, Hindi, Italian, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Tagalog, Tamil, Vietnamese and Yiddish.</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Audio capsule available in: French, English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, Punjabi, Hindi, Arabic, Mandarin, Tagalog, Bengali, Yiddish, Vietnamese, Portuguese, Italian, Russian and Lingala.</a></li> </ul>	Red
Seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">It's much too hot! Protect yourself from extreme heat</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">It's really hot   Poster</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">It's really hot   Pamphlet</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English and French</li> </ul>	Red
Children and Educational Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">It's really hot</a> (multiple languages)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Keep children cool! Protect your child from extreme heat</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Tool for schools, daycares and summer camps, version 2025</a> (French only)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Guide for camp managers</a> (French only)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Guide for summer camp and playground operators</a> (French only)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information on extreme heat in schools</a> (French only)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Multiple languages available: English, Arabic, Bengali, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, Farsi, Greek, Haitian Creole, Hindi, Italian, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Tagalog, Tamil, Vietnamese and Yiddish.</a></li> </ul>	Orange
Athletes/sports enthusiasts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">You're active in the heat. You're at risk!</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">What to do when exercising in the heat</a> (French only)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Brochure for active people</a> (French only)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English and French</li> </ul>	Orange
Animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Protect your pets from the heat</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• French</li> </ul>	Orange
Workers (construction, agriculture, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Preventing Heat Stroke</a></li> <li>• Working in the heat</li> <li>• <a href="#">Computer based tools for workplace heat stress</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• French only</li> </ul>	Orange
Water Resources Manager/Municipal Pools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Information on beaches and swimming pools to ensure good water quality during extreme heat</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• French only</li> </ul>	Green

**Red:** Essential-to be actively broadcast during hot weather. **Orange:** Important-to be used according to the context or the clientele. **Green:** Optional-to be consulted or distributed as needed



# ANIMATION GUIDE AND ACTIVITIES

## Quiz Games

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**Objective:** Provide information on the measures to take during hot weather and break down misconceptions in a fun way.

**Description:** Games for testing knowledge on preventive measures and break down certain myths.

**Format:** On paper or interactive (Kahoot, PowerPoint, Google Forms), depending on the resources available

**Audience:** Can be adapted for all ages (children, adults, seniors)

**Difficulty level:** Intermediate (point system or team responses)

**Time required:** 30–45 minutes, depending on the target audience and the chosen format

**Materials provided:** Laminated or digital (PowerPoint or Kahoot) question cards, Fact or Fiction posters

**Interactive quiz:** Heat wave—True or False? (See Appendix F)

## Hands-on Workshops

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**Objective:** Engage participants in hands-on activities focused on preparation and prevention.

**Description:** Engage participants in practical, hands-on activities to support preparation and prevention. These workshops are designed to strengthen individuals' ability to prepare for heat waves, while promoting a collective approach to prevention and community responsibility.

### Workshop 1: Create a “hot weather kit”

**Objective:** Inform participants about the importance of being prepared and empowered during heat waves.

**Description:** Hands-on group workshop with an interactive demonstration to identify the essential items to have on hand during periods of high heat (water, spray bottle, fan, medications, list of emergency contacts, etc.)

**Format:** Interactive (list of essentials)

**Audience:** Adaptable by age (children, adults, seniors)

**Difficulty level:** Low

**Time required:** 45–60 minutes

**Materials provided:** Plain fabric bags + decoration supplies, sample objects or visuals to illustrate the essentials, My Hot Weather Kit to Go poster or checklist (see Appendix H)

**Workshop 1: “Assemble your hot weather kit”**



## Workshop 2: Routine Daily Check

**Objective:** Encourage participants to make a daily habit of preventive measures and make safety a part of their summer routine.

**Description:** The goal of this collaborative workshop is to make preventive measures a daily habit during periods of high heat (hydration, ventilation, contacting loved ones, checking the weather).

**Format:** Printable, magnetic, or online

**Audience:** Adaptable by age (children, adults, seniors)

**Difficulty level:** Low

**Time required:** 30–45 minutes

**Materials provided:** Printed or magnetic checklist templates.

**Hot-Weather Habits Checklist (see Appendix I)**

## Prevention Calendar: June to August

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**Objective:** Plan and anchor good reflexes throughout the summer

**Description:** Proposed activities for each week (such as weather reminders, workshops on nutrition, community calls for vigilance). Printable version to post in meeting rooms or to give to beneficiaries.

**Format:** Wall, digital, or printable

**Audience:** Can be adapted for all ages (children, adults, seniors)

**Difficulty level:** Low-Intermediate

**Time required:** 30–45 minutes

**Materials provided:** Calendar: wall, online, or printable; visuals and pictograms

**Prevention Calendar: June to August (see Appendix J)**

### How it works:

- A theme per week (ex.: hydration, cooling your home, keeping an eye on loved ones, first signs of heat stroke).

### Associated activities:

- Weekly challenges (ex.: drink 8 glasses of water a day)
- Community Awareness Day
- Reminder on social media accounts or newsletters

### Materials provided:

- Wall calendar or printable calendar
- Exportable electronic version for online publication
- Pictograms and visuals included for each theme



## Doing the Right Things in a Heat Wave

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### Examples of activities in school settings

For more information see: [Adopter les bons gestes face aux vagues de chaleur](#) (French only)





## CONCLUSION

As heat waves continue to intensify, community efforts are more important than ever. Frontline workers and community organizations play a key role in preventing the adverse effects of extreme heat, especially for populations at risk.

This toolkit has been created to help you implement simple and effective activities before, during and after a heat event. By focusing on prevention, clear communication, and local support, we all contribute to reducing risks and strengthening our collective resilience.

**Let's all work together to take care of one another!**





## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Climate-related Advice](#)
- [Protection from the sun and UV rays | Gouvernement du Québec](#)
- Individual heat adaptation measures | [Institut national de santé publique du Québec](#)
- Heat Island Mapping: [Cartographie des îlots de chaleur urbains | Institut national de santé publique du Québec](#)
- Map of Air-Conditioned Public Spaces: [Ville de Montréal cooling centres](#)
- Health Montreal : [Heat | Montréal Regional Public Health Directorate](#)
- [Heat](#)
- [Climate change in Montréal](#)
- [Emergency plan template](#)
- [Make an Emergency Plan—The Canadian Red Cross](#)
- Coping with an Emotional Shock: [Coping with Crisis](#)
- [Get prepared: Home](#)
- [Publications | ROHCMUM](#)
- [St. John's Ambulance \(Québec\)](#)

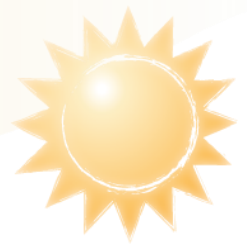


## APPENDIX

### Appendix A: People at risk in oppressive and extreme heat

- Child (0 to 14 years old)
- People aged 65 years and over, with no air conditioner;
  - Particularly at risk: People aged 75 years and older, who live alone and are socially isolated
- Pregnant individuals
- People with disabilities
- People of all ages who take certain medications that can worsen the effects of extreme heat
  - People of all ages with chronic conditions or the following pathologies:
    - Cerebrovascular and cardiovascular: Atherosclerosis, uncontrolled high blood pressure, heart failure, peripheral or cerebral vascular pathology;
    - Neurological: Parkinson’s disease, Alzheimer’s disease and cognitive issues, autonomic nervous system abnormalities;
    - Endocrine: diabetes, hyperthyroid
    - Psychiatric: depression, eating disorders, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia;
    - Respiratory: severe respiratory disorders;
    - Renal: kidney failure;
    - Other: class III obesity; infection (acute febrile illness).
- People aged 25 to 64 years old with a low level of education
- Recent immigrants
- People who understand neither French nor English
- Visible minorities
- People of Indigenous identity
- Renters
- Single-parent families
- People living alone
- People experiencing homelessness
- People living in urban heat islands
- People with low income
- People with drug or alcohol addictions

Source : Évaluation de la vulnérabilité de l’agglomération de Montréal aux changements climatiques -Rapport 2024 Table 15



## Appendix B—Communications Tools (Prevention during extreme heat)

### 1. Script–Check-in Calls

**Objective:** Check on people who are at risk during hot weather, provide information, and check on possible needs.

**Sample script:**

- Hi! This is [Name] from [Organization]. We are currently doing a round of check-in calls because of the hot weather. How are you doing today?
- Have you had the chance to drink some water and keep cool?
- Do you need any help or any type of support?
- Can I call you back in a few days' time?

### 2. Sample emails/newsletters

**Objective:** Quickly inform many people or partner organizations.

**Recommended content:**

- Current weather reports and advisories
- Reminders about prevention (hydration, staying indoors, checking on loved ones)
- Available resources (air-conditioned spaces, helplines, transportation)
- Reassuring tone, short sentences, clear illustrations

### 3. Prepared News Releases

**Objective:** Have a variety of messages available for quick distribution (media, social media, posters).

**Examples:**

- Heat warning: take care of yourself and others
- Are you feeling hot? What to do during a heat wave.
- Call your loved ones: one call can make a big difference!

**Tips for clear, reassuring, and personalized messages (see Appendix A)**

- Use simple terms that are understood by everyone.
- Use short, affirmative sentences.
- Repeat key messages (drink water, stay cool, watch for warning signs).
- Use action verbs and active constructions.
- Provide a clear means of asking for help.
- Take things in a logical order, starting with the most important information, and add links between paragraphs if needed.



#### 4. Template for social media messages

**Objective:** Create awareness, inform, and remind the audience of the preventive measures to take during hot weather.

**Recommended format:**

- Short messages: Under 280 characters
- Use emojis or an eye-catching image; Use visuals to draw attention
- Hashtags: Use relevant hashtags to expand your reach (such as #HeatWave #HeatHealth #Hydrate)
- Useful links or emergency number: Provide a link or a contact number to use in an emergency if needed.

**Sample messages:**

- 🌞 It's hot! Drink water, keep cool, and take care of yourself and your loved ones. #HeatWave #HeatSafety
- 👴 We are in a heat wave. Seniors and children are the most at risk. Remember to check up on them! #HeatHealth
- 💧 Drink water regularly, even if you don't feel thirsty. Dehydration can be bad for your health. #Hydrate
- 📞 Worried about a loved one? Call or visit them! One simple act can save a life. #HeatCaring
- 🐶 🐱 🚗 🌡️ Psssst! Animals also suffer in the heat. Make sure they always have enough fresh water and never leave them unattended in a parked car. #HeatwavePets

#### 5. Easy Read version

**Objective:** Make messages accessible to everyone, including those with reading or comprehension difficulties.

**Samples of Easy Read messages:**

- It is very hot outside.
- Drink water often.
- Stay in the shade or go to a cool place.
- Close your curtains to keep your house cool.
- Call your friends or family to see if they are okay.
- If you feel sick, call 9-1-1.



## Appendix C: Messages about Heat and Health

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**Message 1:** You can prevent heat-related illness.

**Message 2:** Everyone is vulnerable to heat-related illnesses during a heat wave. But some people are more at risk, including:

- older adults;
- pregnant women;
- infants and young children;
- People with chronic conditions such as breathing difficulties, heart problems, or psychiatric illnesses;
- People who work in the heat;
- People who exercise in the heat;
- People experiencing homelessness;
- Low-income earners.

**Message 3:** If you take medication or have health issues, ask your physician or your pharmacist if those factors put you at risk of heat-related health issues and follow their advice.

**Message 4:** Heat-related illnesses include heat stroke, heat exhaustion, fainting due to heat, heat-related edema (swelling of hands, feet, and ankles), heat rash, and heat cramps (muscle cramps).

Watch for the symptoms of heat-related illnesses, especially:

- Dizziness or fainting;
- nausea or vomiting; headaches;
- Rapid breathing or heartbeat;
- extreme thirst;
- less frequent urination and urine that is unusually dark yellow.

If you experience any of these symptoms during oppressive heat, immediately go to a cool location and drink liquids, preferably water.

**Message 5: Heat Stroke is a Medical Emergency!** Call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number immediately if you are caring for someone, such as a neighbour, who has a high body temperature and is unconscious, confused, or has stopped sweating.

While waiting for help, **immediately begin to cool the person off by:**

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

**Message 6:** Check on older neighbours, friends, and family often—especially if they have a chronic illness. Make sure they are staying cool and drinking water.



**Message 7:** Drink lots of cool liquids, especially water. To help prevent dehydration, do not wait until you feel thirsty. You can be dehydrated before you feel thirsty.

**Message 8:** Plan or reorganize your outdoor activities to take place during the coolest times of day.

**Message 9:** Wear loose, light-coloured clothing made of breathable fabrics.

**Message 10:** Never leave people or pets you are taking care of in a parked car or in direct sunlight.

**Message 11:** Escape the heat by spending a few hours in a cool location. It could be in the shade under some trees, a pool, or an air-conditioned location such as a public building, a shopping centre, a grocery store, a place of worship, or a municipal library.

**Message 12:** Take cool baths or showers until you feel refreshed.

**Message 13:** Prepare meals that do not require using the oven.

**Message 14:** Keep the sun out by closing curtains, shutters, or blinds during the day.

**Message 15:** Avoid being out in the sun. Protect yourself from the sun by wearing a wide-brimmed, breathable hat or a parasol.

Source : Communiquer les risques des périodes de chaleur accablante pour la santé : Trousse à l'intention des responsables de la santé publique et de la gestion des urgences

## Appendix D: Heat Wave Prevention Checklists (population)

[Format for printed](#) – [French version](#)

### Prevention in the event of a HEATWAVE



#### BEFORE

##### PREPARE YOUR HOME

- Make sure you can keep your home cool: opaque curtains, blinds, fans, air conditioner.
- Prepare an **emergency kit**: water, lightweight clothing, a spray bottle, medication.
- Use an indoor thermometer to monitor room temperature.

##### PLAN YOUR ACTIVITIES

- Check on **weather** alerts: sign up to receive weather advisories by dialing 1 866 982-7282 or by visiting **CONSEILS CLIMAT**'s website.
- Make an **emergency plan** that includes reminders to hydrate and emergency contacts.
- Discuss **preventive measures** with your friends, colleagues, and neighbours.

##### CREATE A SUPPORT NETWORK

- Have a list of emergency contacts ready.
- Identify people around you who are at risk: seniors, people living alone or who are ill.
- If you live alone, designate someone to check on you.



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#### DURING

##### ADJUST YOUR LIFESTYLE ACCORDINGLY

- Drink water regularly**, even when you don't feel thirsty.
- Avoid alcohol** and heavy meals.
- Avoid physical exertion** between 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m..
- Take cool baths/showers** or use a spray bottle to cool off.
- Spend a **few hours each day** in public places with air conditioning: Pools, libraries, cooling centres.
- Wear loose-fitting, lightweight clothing** in light colours.
- Protect yourself from the sun:** Hat, SPF 15+ sunscreen.
- Check on friends and family members** who are at risk, and let others know how you are doing.

##### COOL YOUR HOME

- Close curtains and windows during the day.
- Open them at night if the air outside is cooler.
- Limit the use of heat-generating appliances.

##### KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR HEALTH

- **Dehydration:** extreme thirst, fatigue, headache, dry mouth.
- **Heat stroke:** dizziness, nausea, confusion, skin that is hot and dry, lack of perspiration.

Check local measures and services available in your municipality.

#### AFTER

- Open windows and doors to let evacuate accumulated heat out of your home.
- Continue to drink water regularly.
- Update your kit and your contacts to prepare for the next heatwave.

#### WHAT TO DO?

- Feeling unwell? If you have health-related questions, call Info-Santé at **8-1-1**.
- In case of an emergency call **9-1-1**.

#### For more information and tips



[www.quebec.ca/en/public-safety-emergencies/emergency-situations-disasters-and-natural-hazards/what-to-do-before-during-after-emergency-disaster/extreme-heat](http://www.quebec.ca/en/public-safety-emergencies/emergency-situations-disasters-and-natural-hazards/what-to-do-before-during-after-emergency-disaster/extreme-heat)

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## Appendix E: End-of-season report template Heat-related Interventions—Summer 2025

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(To be adapted)

### 1. Context

In the summer of 2024, officials carried out a series of community interventions to reach people at risk—especially seniors and those who are socially isolated—as part of a plan to prevent the potential impacts of heat waves. This report summarizes the actions taken, frontline observations, and recommendations for future seasons.

### 2. Overall Results

Total number of people reached: 354

Activities carried out:

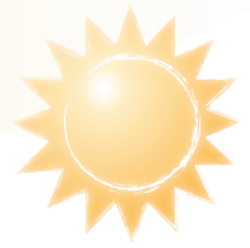
- Check-in calls: 112
- Home visits: 84
- Hot weather kits distributed: 158

### 3. Frontline observations

- Seniors living alone and without air conditioning are most affected by the heat.
- Many residents **were not aware of the available cooling centres** or did not know how to get there.
- **The most frequently needed items** included fans, water bottles, damp towels, and cooling blankets.
- Some caseworkers noticed a **decrease in energy or morale among seniors** during prolonged heat waves.

### 4. Actions taken

- Established a grid to better plan visits and identify cases urgently in need of attention.
- Field logbook completed by caseworkers to record observations and incidents, and quickly adapt their responses.
- Collect feedback from participants and caseworkers to improve practices:
  - 87% of people called indicated that they felt better prepared to deal with the heat.
  - Caseworkers emphasize the importance of human contact.



## 5. Lessons learned

- **Preventive planning** is essential: actions taken at the first signs of heat were the most effective.
- **Cross-sectoral coordination** (territorial public health, municipalities, community organizations) must be stronger to avoid duplication of efforts and to maximize coverage.
- **Adapting messages** based on language, culture, and autonomy of the people contacted makes efforts more successful.

## 6. Recommendations for the following year

- Launch actions **in June** with a solid communication plan.
- **Train more volunteers** to increase intervention potential.
- **Acquire heat-related items** (water bottles, information sheets) ahead of time.
- Do more **post-heat wave follow-ups**, particularly with people identified as being at risk.

## 7. Conclusion

The summer of 2024 confirmed the importance of community interventions during heat waves. Thanks to the efforts of frontline teams and the support of partners, many at-risk individuals received effective assistance. The report shows the effects of collective action and provided the foundations for improving and strengthening future iterations of the heat plan.



## Annex F- Interactive heat wave quiz- True or False

(Sample questions)	TRUE	FALSE
<input type="checkbox"/> Drinking coffee helps you keep hydrated during a heat wave False: Caffeine increases your body's urine production, which can contribute to dehydration.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> A dark room is always cooler. False: Without ventilation, heat can stay trapped in the room.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>At what temperature is a heat warning issued in Québec?</b> : A) 28 °C B) 30 °C C) 33 °C C) 33 °C, according to the Regional Public Health Department or when extreme heat is forecast (see definitions and thresholds on page 4).		
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Name three signs of heat stroke (for other possible responses see <a href="#">The Health Effects of Heat   Gouvernement du Québec</a>).</b> Examples: Dizziness, confusion, skin that is hot and dry.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Wait until you are thirsty before drinking water. False: Thirst is a late sign of dehydration.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Children and seniors are most at risk of heat stroke. True:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> A fan is enough to protect yourself in high temperatures. False: A fan alone is not enough, especially when the temperature is over 30 °C.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Taking a cold shower is a good way to refresh yourself. True: It can help to lower your body temperature.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> In the summertime, you should keep all windows closed during the day. False: Air out your home early in the morning or late in the evening, and close the windows during the hottest parts of the day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Seniors feel less thirst. True: They are more at risk for dehydration.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> It is good to eat food with a high water content (watermelon, strawberries, melon, cucumbers) during a heat wave. True: They help keep you hydrated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> It is better to wear dark clothing in the summer to block UV rays. False: Light-coloured clothing reflects the heat more effectively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> It is better not to use sunscreen because it blocks perspiration. False: Sunscreen protects against heat stroke without blocking perspiration.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## Appendix G Workshop: “Assemble your hot weather kit”

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### Activity:

Participants are encouraged to assemble their hot weather kit from a list of essential items. As a group they will discuss how useful each item is and the reasons for including it.

This activity encourages discussion, promotes preventive habits, and allows each participant to be better prepared for extreme heat.

### Conducting the activity:

- **Introduction (5 min):** Explain the risks associated with extreme heat and outline the purpose of the hot weather kit.
- **Group exploration (10–15 min):** Poster or table that presents various (more or less useful) objects. As a group, the participants select those items they consider essential.
- **Guided discussion (10 min):** Each group explains its choices. The activity leader concludes with the official recommendations.
- **Personalized creation (15 min):** Each participant receives a fabric bag they can personalize (drawings, names, stickers) and fills it with the elements provided (in some cases, symbolic).

### Recommended content to include in each hot weather kit:

- Reusable water bottle
- A hat or cap
- Sunscreen
- Moist towelettes
- A portable or hand-held fan
- A list of emergency contact numbers
- Routine medication (such as prescriptions, empty pill organizer)
- Non-perishable snacks (such as granola bars, apple sauce)

### Materials provided:

- Plain fabric bags + decoration supplies
- A completed demonstrator bag or visuals to illustrate the essentials
- Poster or checklist My Hot Weather Kit to Go



## Appendix H: Checklist My Hot Weather Kit

### Why make a hot weather kit?

When the weather gets very hot, it is important to have a few simple items on hand that can make a big difference. A hot weather kit is ready to use, both at home and when out of the house.

### What should be in your hot weather kit:

ITEM	WHY?	TIP
 Small bottle of water (500 ml or more)	Always stay hydrated	Fill it before each outing
 Cap or wide-brimmed hat	To protect from the sun	Preferably a light-coloured material
 Sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher)	To help prevent sunstroke	Apply every two hours
 A hand fan or portable battery-powered fan	To cool off while you are out.	Some models are rechargeable.
 Moist towelettes or damp washcloth	To cool off your skin (neck, arms)	Keep in a sealed bag
 Light snacks	For an energy boost or during an extended wait	Choose items that don't need refrigeration
 A list of emergency contacts	To call in case you feel unwell	Include: loved ones, physician, pharmacist
 Essential medications	Remember to bring these with you when you go out	Protect them from the heat
 A block of ice or an ice pack (optional)	To keep water cool or for relief in case of heat stroke	Carry in an insulated bag

### Usage instructions:

- Always take the kit with you when you go out during a heat wave.
- Regularly check the kit's contents and replace any missing or expired items.
- Personalize your kit to meet your medical needs and lifestyle.
- Also create a kit for at home and keep it near your bed or favourite chair.

### Remember:

- Drink, cover up, cool off, and ask for help when needed.
- In hot weather, your kit will be there to help you keep well.



## Appendix I: Hot-Weather Habits Checklist

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(See preventive checklists in Appendix D if needed)

### Activity:

Participants are encouraged to develop a simple, effective daily routine to help protect themselves from the summer heat. They will learn which essential elements to check on each day to keep safe.

As a group they will develop a checklist to use each day during hot weather. Through discussions and real-life examples, they will work together to create a tailored ritual (such as hydrate regularly, check the indoor temperature, contact a loved one who is at risk, avoid physical activity between 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.).

This activity helps to anchor simple but important daily habits.

### Some examples to check on:

- Have I...
  - 💧 Had 6 to 8 glasses of water today?
  - 🌡️ Checked the indoor temperature?
  - 🗑️ Aired out my home in the morning or the evening?
  - ∞ Avoided strenuous physical activity between 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.?
  - 📄 Closed the curtains or blinds to keep the room cool?
  - 📞 Checked on someone you know who is vulnerable or let people know how I am?
  - 🌤️ Checked the weather forecast for heat alerts?
  - ❄️ Bonus: Planned an outing to an air-conditioned location? (Such as a library, shopping mall, etc.)

### Material provided:

- Customizable checklist (magnetic or online)



## Appendix J: Preventive Calendar (June to August)

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### How it works: 1 theme + 1 activity per week

A theme per week (ex.: hydration, cooling your home, keeping an eye on loved ones, first signs of heat stroke).

### Associated activities:

- Weekly challenges (ex.: drink 8 glasses of water a day)
- Community Awareness Day
- Reminder on social media accounts or newsletters

### JUNE

*Week 1:* Your top priority: Hydrate! **Challenge: 8 glasses of water/day**

*Week 2:* Cool home, clear mind. **Workshop: Ventilation and blinds**

*Week 3:* Preparing your hot weather kit. **Hands-on Workshop and Kits**

*Week 4:* Healthy habits. **Quiz + Fact or Fiction posters**

### JULY

*Week 1:* Watching out for loved ones. **Create a list of at-risk loved ones to call “Who should I call?”**

*Week 2:* Signs not to ignore. **Workshop on signs and first aid**

*Week 3:* Eating well when it’s hot. **Cool recipes**

*Week 4:* Smart outings when it’s hot. **Map of Cooling Locations**

### AUGUST

*Week 1:* Take care of yourself. **A verification and self-care routine**

*Week 2:* Community reminders. **Mass messaging (newsletters or social media)**

*Week 3:* Feedback. **Workshop: What I Learned this Summer**

*Week 4:* End-of-summer session. **Final quiz and healthy snacks**

### Materials provided:

- Wall calendar or printable calendar
- Exportable electronic version for online publication
- Pictograms and visuals included for each theme

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