

# Extreme Heat

A heat wave is an extended period of extreme heat, and is often accompanied by high humidity. These conditions can be dangerous and even life-threatening for humans who don't take the proper precautions.

## Step 1: Get a Kit

- Get an [Emergency Supply Kit](#) which includes items like non-perishable food, water, a battery-powered or hand-crank radio, extra flashlights and batteries.

## Step 2: Make a Plan

### Prepare Your Family

- Make a [Family Emergency Plan](#). Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so it is important to know how you will contact one another, how you will get back together and what you will do in case of an emergency.
- Plan places where your family will meet, both within and outside of your immediate neighborhood.
- It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, so an out-of-town contact may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members.
- You may also want to inquire about emergency plans at places where your family spends time: work, daycare and school. If no plans exist, consider volunteering to help create one.
- Be sure to consider the specific needs of your family members
  - Notify caregivers and babysitters about your plan.
  - Make plans for your pets
- Take a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) class from your local [Citizen Corps chapter](#). Keep your training current.

## Step 3: Be Informed

### Prepare Your Home

- Install window air conditioners snugly; insulate if necessary.
- Check air-conditioning ducts for proper insulation.
- Install temporary window reflectors (for use between windows and drapes), such as aluminum foil-covered cardboard, to reflect heat back outside.
- Weather-strip doors and sills to keep cool air in.
- Cover windows that receive morning or afternoon sun with drapes, shades, awnings or louvers. (Outdoor awnings or louvers can reduce the heat that enters a home by up to 80 percent.)
- Keep storm windows up all year.

### Listen to Local Officials

Learn about the emergency plans that have been established in your area by your [state and local government](#). In any emergency, always listen to the instructions given by local emergency management officials.

For further information on how to plan and prepare for extreme heat, visit: [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#), [American Red Cross](#) or [NOAA Watch](#).