

Table 9: Potential extreme heat preparedness and response actions, and which party or parties may be tasked with either deciding to initiate an action or implementing it on the ground. Note that municipal leaders are associated with every action, in part because this Guidebook is designed with municipal leaders as a key audience. Local capacity and needs will vary, but assigning a single person to be responsible for directing each action may help streamline the response.

Preparedness and Response Actions for Extreme Heat Thresholds	Potential Lead(s)				
	Municipal Leaders	Cooling Center Operators	First Responders	Business Owners	Community-Based Organizations
WEATHER IS HOT BUT DOES NOT REACH NWS ALERT CRITERIA					
Forecasted Heat Index: 85 to 90°F – Preparedness Time Frame for Action: Long (Up to 7 days)					
Identify potential cooling center locations	X	X		X	X
Identify potential outdoor cooling options (pools/beaches, splash pads, etc.)	X	X		X	X
Engage key response partners (cooling center location operators, emergency management/response staff, healthcare partners, etc.) for potential activation	X		X		
Assess any internal risks, e.g. to municipal staff working outdoors, municipal summer camps, municipal outdoor events, impacts to businesses and staffing, impacts to healthcare facilities, etc.	X	X	X	X	X
Forecasted Heat Index: 90 to 95°F – Limited Response Time Frame for Action: Long (Up to 7 days)					
Consider opening/promoting formal/informal cooling locations or resource hubs	X	X		X	X
Consider opening/promoting outdoor cooling options (pools/beaches, splash pads, etc.)	X	X		X	X
Identify vulnerable groups in need of support (i.e. older adults, unhoused, those who are homebound or medically fragile) and consider outreach to partners or organizations that serve them	X		X		X
Communicate regularly with key response partners to identify areas of need and available resources	X	X	X		X
Assess any local outdoor events (parades, sporting events, concerts, etc.) and ensure organizers have sufficient water, shade, and medical support	X		X	X	
Assess any internal risks, e.g. to municipal staff working outdoors, municipal summer camps, municipal outdoor events, etc.	X	X	X	X	X
NWS HEAT ADVISORY					
Forecasted Heat Index: 95 to 100°F – Full response Time Frame for Action: Short (Usually 12-48 hours)					
Open formal cooling centers (e.g. town halls, schools, public libraries)	X	X		X	X
Promote informal cooling locations or resource hubs (e.g., local businesses, movie theaters, existing shelters)	X	X		X	X
Consider enhancing outdoor locations (install pop-up tents, run misters, fans, and splashpads, distribute bottled water, etc.)	X	X		X	X
Consider formal and informal support networks (e.g. peer-to-peer checks) to check in on and assist at-risk or vulnerable residents	X				
Communicate regularly with key response partners to identify areas of need and available resources	X	X	X		X
Prepare public outreach materials, gather coordination and communication partners, and discuss ways to assess needs and prioritize information-sharing efforts with highest-risk populations	X				
Consider adjusting timing/location of local outdoor events (parades, sporting events, concerts, etc.)	X			X	
Begin implementing mitigation steps for internal risks such as adjusting outdoor workers' schedules, modifying summer camp activities, etc.	X	X	X	X	X
Consider relocating visitors, residents, occupants, and staff to cooler locations if needed	X	X		X	X
Direct community members to a call 211 or a municipal information line for questions	X		X		

Preparedness and Response Actions for Extreme Heat Thresholds	Municipal Leaders	Cooling Center Operators	First Responders	Business Owners	Community-Based Organizations
NWS EXTREME HEAT WATCH					
Forecasted Heat Index: 105+°F possible - Emergency Preparedness Time Frame for Action: Long (Usually 2-4 days)					
Open formal cooling centers or resource hubs (e.g. town halls, schools, libraries) and assess ability to open for extended hours	X	X		X	X
Promote informal cooling locations or resource hubs (e.g., coffee shops, movie theaters, existing shelters)	X	X		X	X
Assess ability to enhance outdoor locations where possible and gather/stage resources and supplies (procure/prepare pop-up tents, misters, bottled water, etc.)	X	X		X	X
Communicate with partners or organizations that serve vulnerable groups to identify needs and resources for serving their constituents	X	X			X
Organize network to perform peer-to-peer checks on at-risk or vulnerable residents	X				X
Prepare and distribute public outreach materials and discuss ways to assess needs and prioritize information-sharing efforts with people at highest risk	X				
Communicate with the public to amplify key messages, communicate actions to take to stay safe, and encourage use of cooling centers and other resources	X	X	X	X	X
Assess planned outdoor events and consider cancellation or modification options	X			X	X
Assess internal at-risk groups and events, such as outdoor workers, summer camps, municipal activities, etc. and consider implementing mitigation options	X				
Modify/cancel outdoor activities	X			X	
Consider increasing emergency/first responder staffing levels	X		X		
Direct community members to 211 or a municipal information line for questions	X		X		
Consider relocating visitors, residents, occupants, and staff to cooler locations	X	X		X	X
NWS EXTREME HEAT WARNING					
Forecasted Heat Index: 105+°F happening - Emergency Response Time Frame for Action: Short (Usually 12-48 hours)					
Open formal cooling centers or resource hubs (e.g. town halls, schools, libraries) and consider extended hours	X	X		X	X
Promote informal cooling locations or resource hubs (e.g., coffee shops, movie theaters, existing shelters)	X	X		X	X
Enhance outdoor locations where possible (install pop-up tents, run misters, distribute bottled water, etc.)	X	X		X	X
Communicate with partners or organizations that serve vulnerable groups to identify emergent needs from their constituents	X				X
Implement peer-to-peer checks on at-risk or vulnerable residents where possible	X				X
Share prepared public outreach materials through identified channels	X				
Communicate frequently with key response partners to identify areas of critical need and deploy response as needed	X		X		
Communicate with the public to amplify key messages, communicate actions to take to stay safe, and encourage use of cooling centers and other resources	X	X	X	X	X
Modify/cancel outdoor activities	X			X	
Implement mitigation options for internal risks such as adjusting outdoor workers' schedules, modifying summer camp locations and activities, etc.	X				
Relocate residents, staff, and occupants to cooler locations if needed	X	X	X	X	
Coordinate with utilities to ensure continuous service and/or to service those with greatest need	X				
Open a county or municipal Emergency or Department Operations Center (if warranted) and assign a staff member to field questions and media inquiries (for severe events and large, complex responses)	X				
Mobilize extra emergency response and medical personnel (as needed)	X	X	X	X	X
Direct community members to 211 or a municipal information line for questions	X		X		
* Heat index forecasts and current heat index conditions can be found on any weather site or app - look for measures such as 'Feels Like' ** To receive notifications about NWS Advisories, Watches, and Warnings, sign up for NWS alerts at Interactive NWS (https://inws.ncep.noaa.gov/) or request notification from your Local Emergency Management Director, County Emergency Management Agency Director, or Maine CDC Public Health District Liaison.					