

Emergency and School Security **Quick Reference Guide**

Heatwave

What is a Heatwave?

A heatwave can be defined as a prolonged period of excessive heat. In Australia excessive heat can vary from 37°C to 42°C. A heatwave occurs when there are a number of consecutive days with an above average temperature, often combined with high humidity.

Preparedness prior to the event

- Plan ahead to reduce the risk of getting heat exhaustion or a heat-related illness
- Look at alternatives to help to cool your building, for example, install awnings, shade cloth or internal blinds or curtains on the sides of the building which face the sun
- Listen to your local weather forecast so you know if a heatwave is on the way

Immediate action

Refer to Queensland Health Guidelines at <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/disaster/heat/heat-wave.asp>

Keep out of the heat

- Plan your day to keep activity to a minimum during the hottest part of the day
- If you must go out then wear lightweight, light-coloured, loose, porous clothes, a wide-brimmed hat and sunscreen and regularly rest in the shade and keep fluid intake up
- If you can, avoid going out in the hottest part of the day (11am – 3pm)
- Avoid strenuous activities

Stay cool

- Wear appropriate clothing to suit the hot weather
- Stay inside, in the coolest rooms in your building, as much as possible
- When the temperature inside rises, open up windows and doors when there is a cool breeze
- Use fans and air-conditioners where possible to keep cool

Monitor agricultural unit animals for heat stress (if applicable)

Animals can be affected by heat-related illness and anyone in charge of livestock has a duty of care to provide food, water and appropriate shelter for the animal.

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Signs and Symptoms of heat-related illness

Although the presence of symptoms may vary from person to person, below is a list of common signs and symptoms of heat-related illness that can affect people:

Sunburn	Flushed or pale skin
Heat risk or prickly heat	Cramps
Heat exhaustion*	Heat stroke*
Tiredness and weakness	Fainting/collapse
Nausea/vomiting	Headache
Dizziness	Rapid pulse
Changes to the level of consciousness (e.g. disorientation, drowsiness)	

*Heat stroke can affect a person engaging in physical activity who has not been identified as suffering from heat exhaustion and who has persisted in further activity. Heat exhaustion and heat stroke can still occur where there has been good hydration.

First Aid

What you can do to assist anyone needing first aid: in an emergency, telephone Triple Zero (000) and seek medical assistance immediately.

Please note that Queensland State Schools remain open and students are not sent home during periods of excessive heat or heatwave conditions. Schools should refer to the Managing Excessive Heat in Schools procedure at: <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/healthy/wellbeing-guidelines/heat.html>

Follow up actions

- Complete the relevant report available from <https://myhr-whs.deta.qld.gov.au>
- School closures are posted on DoE website <http://closures.det.qld.gov.au/>, Facebook, Twitter and the Queensland Government website <http://www.qld.gov.au/education/schools/information/pages/closure.html>

Additional Information

For further information contact Emergency and School Security on (07) 303 46011

DoE Website <https://qed.qld.gov.au/>

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