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Statement from Kent County Emergency Manager Lt. Lou Hunt on This Week's Heat Wave

We collectively waited much of the year in anticipation of warm weather, but this week may be a little too warm for comfort. On Wednesday, July 17, 2019, daytime temperatures will near and surpass 90 degrees, with predicted highs of 95 degrees on Thursday – Saturday. It will also be very humid, which will increase the discomfort.

It is important to be aware of the dangers heat can present to residents, and pets, so we can stay safe and remain as comfortable as possible. Residents are encouraged to follow these simple tips:

- spend as much time as possible in a temperature-controlled cool environment,
- stay in the shade with a good breeze/air flow to decrease felt temperatures, and
- remain well hydrated by drinking water (more than usual) which can help the body's natural process for adapting to higher temperatures, as opposed to alcohol drinks that can be counter-productive and dehydrate the body.

Knowing the signs of heat exhaustion (which can include weakness, cold and clammy skin, darker than normal urine, significant sweating, cramps, dizziness, headache and nausea, among others) is a strong indicator it is time to get to a cooler environment, drink some cold water, and rest. Heat stroke, on the other hand, is a medical emergency with signs such as confusion, disorientation, the absence of sweating, high body temperature, rapid pulse/heart rate, and others.

Cooling centers will be open throughout this event for residents to go and rest from the heat. Most cooling centers will be open during the day while the temperatures are hottest (nighttime temperatures this week will be much more tolerable, in the mid 70's). For locations and hours of cooling centers, please call 211 and a United Way representative will assist you in locating the closest cooling center.

Remember, this week is a good time to slow things down a little, stay out of the sun, and make sure the people around you (and yourself) are coping during this heat event. Also, please remember your family pets! Pets that live outside will require shade and lots of cool water, but residents are encouraged to bring their pets inside for cooler temperatures.