

# LOCALNEWS

## Beat the heat: use caution when temps rise

BY EMILY GEDDE  
Staff Writer

Borderland and much of Minnesota is in the grip of a heat wave showcasing warm temperatures, high humidity and the fear of heat-related illnesses and injuries.

The culprit of the sudden summer-like weather? According to the National Weather Service in Duluth, a strong flow of air from the Gulf of Mexico is pulling up the warm, moist, muggy air.

“We are seeing dew points in the high 60s and lower 70s, which is high,” said Mike Stewart, meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Duluth. “It makes for uncomfortable conditions.”

Uncomfortable is right. The weather service website showed temperature and heat-index readings as high as 110 in other parts of the state. Temperatures in direct sun can be much higher, making the risk of heat-related illnesses a concern for anyone working or exercising outside. Public health officials warned Minnesotans to keep hydrated and find air conditioning.

“The biggest thing is to drink plenty of water,” said Nancy Lee, Koochiching County Public Health nurse.

Beverages like Gatorade and pop that are loaded with sugar don’t provide the body with hydration like water does when temperatures rise, Lee said. And, she said, the more water consumed, the better.

Lee said the elderly and

young people are the most susceptible for heat-related illnesses.

“People really shouldn’t go outside if they don’t have to,” she said, encouraging anyone who can stay indoors with air conditioning or a fan to do so.

She added pet owners need to be conscientious of leaving their four-legged family members outside, too.

“They don’t handle this heat any better than we do,” she said. In fact, just like humans, animals can suffer from heat stroke, too.

Signs of heat stroke in a pet include: rapid panting, wide eyes, excessive drooling, hot skin, twitching muscles, vomiting and dazed looks.

If animals need to be left outdoors, they should be provided with shade and plenty of fresh water, Lee said. Like children, animals should not be left in the car.

“Always check that backseat,” Lee said. “Even if it is just for a few minutes, children, regardless of age, and pets should never be left in the car.”

Jay Boyle, football coach for International Falls High School, said other than scheduling practices later in the day, the heat hasn’t canceled any practice sessions for the team, but he’s always keeping a close watch on student-athletes. Following Minnesota State High School League guidelines, Boyle said some practices are held in shoulder pads and helmets only.

“We adjust accordingly,”



STAFF PHOTO BY SPENSER BICKETT

**While taking a break from cooling off in the pool, local kids catch grasshoppers outside Falls High School Tuesday.**

the coach said, adding players drink more water on hotter days.

With the team’s first game of the season scheduled for Friday, Boyle said sometimes it is nice to have hotter weather so the players are used to the conditions they could potentially play in.

“It would be nice to be out in what you’ll play in and go full contact,” he said of playing in full pads.

The forecast calls for temperatures near 90 again Wednesday for Borderland, but more of a “relief” is expected for Thursday, Stewart said.

“By Friday and through the weekend, we should be seeing temps back down in the mid 70s,” he said. “Things should be more comfortable this weekend.”

### Just the facts

Keep these tips in mind when beating the heat:

- Use box fans and ceiling fans to promote air circulation throughout your home. Opening doors in the house and using box fans to push hot air outdoors can function as an “exhaust” system and draw cooler evening air into the house.
- Take advantage of the cooling power of water. Fill buckets or basins and soak your feet. Wet towels and bandannas can have a cooling effect when worn on the shoulders or head. Take cool showers or baths, and consider using a spray bottle filled with cold water for refreshing spritzes throughout the day.
- Head downstairs. Since hot air rises, the upper stories of a home will be warmer than the ground floor. A basement can be a cool refuge from the midday heat.
- Eliminate extra sources of heat. Incandescent light bulbs can generate unnecessary heat, as can computers or appliances left running. Eat fresh foods that do not require use of the oven or stove.
- Maintain an adequate level of hydration, which means you’ll need to consume more water than you usually do when it’s hot.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages and caffeine, as both of these substances can act as diuretics and promote dehydration.
- Don’t eat large, protein-rich meals that can increase metabolic heat and warm the body.

## National gas prices stay ‘quiet’

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

Average retail gasoline prices in Minnesota have fallen 2.7 cents in the past week, averaging \$3.48 per gallon Thursday, according to GasBuddy’s daily survey of 2,856 gas outlets in Minnesota. This compares with the national average that has decreased 0.4 cents per gallon in the last week to \$3.57 per gallon, according to gasoline price website MinnesotaGasPrices.com.

Prices in International Falls Sunday averaged \$3.59 per gallon, according to the website.

Including the change in gas prices in Minnesota during the past week, prices Sunday were 22.6 cents per gallon lower compared to the same day one year ago and are 13 cents per gallon lower than a month ago. The national average has decreased 9.5 cents per gallon during the last month and stands 16.6 cents per gallon lower than this day one year ago.

“As driving season works closes out, the national average has been remarkably quiet, so far, but that may change as gasoline inventories declined a sizable amount last week,” said GasBuddy.com Senior Petroleum Analyst Patrick DeHaan. “The Energy Information Administration in its weekly report issued last Wednesday highlighted one of the largest drops in gasoline inventories this year. That was likely a culprit for a late-week rally in gasoline futures and spot prices, which in turn may mean that as this week wears on, gasoline prices could start showing some upward movement.”

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at Smokey Bear Park  
Monday, Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup> • 4-7pm

Hot Dogs, Chips, Brats, Ice Cream, Pop & Water will be served.

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