

South Carolina Long Term Care Emergency Preparedness e-Newsletter:

Winter 2023

Welcome, we're glad you're here.

Another perk of attending a South Carolina Long Term Care Emergency Preparedness - Basic/Advanced Course is gaining access to this bi-annual newsletter curated for nursing home staff members like you.

Be sure to check out our webpage for other helpful resources.

SC LTCEP Webpage

Focus Area: Heat Emergencies

We know, we know. This is the winter newsletter, right?

It may feel a little early, but the time to prepare for heat emergencies is before the weather starts warming up.

Heat is the number one weather-related cause of death in the United

States and should be taken seriously. As humans age, our bodies become less effective at managing body temperature. Increased age combined with chronic medical conditions and medications, means older adults are much more likely to experience heat-related illnesses than younger adults. On warm days, pay close attention to not only the temperature but also the

heat index. The heat index is how hot it feels, measuring temperature and humidity. The more humid it is, the longer it takes for sweat to evaporate and cool down the body.

heat index = temperature + humidity

Heat-Related Illnesses



sunburn to heat stroke. Each illness has different symptoms and requires different levels of medical care. See the following flyer for a list of symptoms and responses. Download the flyer here, print it, and post it at your nurses' station for a summertime reminder to look out for the signs of heat-related illnesses.





Read below for safety tips for residents in warmer weather:

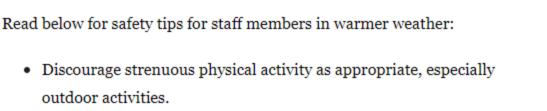
Resident Safety Tips

· Review resident medications and identify those which may cause residents to be more susceptible to heat and sunlight.

- Discourage strenuous physical activity as appropriate, especially outdoor activities. Remind residents to dress in light, loose clothing. Overdressing can
- increase the risk of a heat related illness. · Encourage residents to stay out of direct sunlight, both indoors and outdoors.
- Do not rely on residents to tell you they are overheated! Often, the increase in body temperature is so gradual it can't be recognized by the
- individual.
- Set up hydration stations throughout the facility · Stock up on fluids and cold snacks, such as popsicles

· Ask dietary staff to incorporate cold plate options like salads

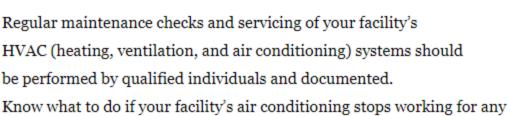
Staff Safety Tips



outdoor activities. Encourage staff to complete outdoor maintenance activities early in the morning to avoid higher temperatures later in the day.

- · Remind staff to drink more water than usual and don't wait until they are thirsty to drink. Increase the frequency of clinical assessments for residents, particularly
- body temperature. Checking skin temperature by touch can be a quick, helpful way to assess a resident.
- For more safety tips on working outdoors, view this flyer <u>here</u>.
- Read below for safety tips for your facility in warmer weather: Regular maintenance checks and servicing of your facility's

Facility Safety Tips



be performed by qualified individuals and documented. Know what to do if your facility's air conditioning stops working for any reason and make sure your staff knows also!

loss of air conditioning?

facility's utilities providers and HVAC service providers on hand in the facility for immediate use during an outage. . Do you know who can order an evacuation of your facility due to a total

Keep the account numbers and emergency phone numbers of your

- If that person was not at work that day, do they have a backup person who could order an evacuation? If so, who is it?
- **Upcoming Courses:**

Year Two features four basic and four (new!) advanced courses offered across the state. Click **here** to download a full schedule with links to register.

Like our Facebook page to stay up to date on

course offerings as they are scheduled.

Facebook Page

Resources

• South Carolina Emergency Management Division Website South Carolina Healthcare Coalition Webpage

- South Carolina Healthcare Coalition Contact List Flyer South Carolina Healthcare Coalition Map
 - South Carolina Public Health Region Map South Carolina Health Care Association Website
 - Hot Weather Safety National Institute on Aging: • https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/hot-weather-safety-olderadults

 - Preparing for Extreme Heat: https://www.ready.gov/heat

• https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/toolkits/extremeheat/default.html

- National Weather Service Heat Safety: https://www.weather.gov/grb/heat · CDC Information on Extreme Heat:
- · OSHA Worker Safety Heat: https://www.osha.gov/heat



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