



Heat Relief Network 2012

FAQ's about the Heat Relief Network

Q: What is the Heat Relief Network?

A: The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) coordinates the regional Heat Relief Network, a network of service providers, faith-based groups, municipalities, businesses and caring citizens mobilizing to provide hydration and heat refuge for people in need.

The network offers a place for people to go who would otherwise be on the streets. In 2011, there were 75 hydration stations and refuge locations throughout the valley. Network participants provide water and refuge for people needing heat relief.

Network participants can serve as a collection point for water bottle and basic needs donations. In 2011, there were 46 water collection points in the valley. The network is voluntary and open to any agency or organization wanting to join.

The ultimate goal of the Heat Relief Network is to prevent heat-related deaths.

Q: Why is the Heat Relief Network Important?

A: A number of heat-related deaths during the summer months tragically underscore the importance of recognizing the dangers of extreme heat.

July is typically the most deadly month in Arizona when it comes to heat-caused deaths.

The high daytime temperatures coupled with the high nighttime temperatures makes this time of year very dangerous. The high night temperatures do not allow for the body to cool down and can result in more people being at risk.

According to the National Weather Service, the Phoenix area averages 110 days of temperatures above 100 degrees each year. It is important to protect yourself from the dangers of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Prolonged exposed to heat can affect anyone. Even healthy people should take precautions during extremely high temperatures.

Vulnerable populations like older adults, children, people who are experiencing homelessness and those who work outdoors, need to take extra precautions.

Q: What is being done to educate the public on the dangers of the heat and provide heat relief?

A: MAG has partnered with non-profit organizations, the faith-based community, cities and towns in the region, and others to educate the public on the dangers of the heat and provide regional heat relief maps.

Two maps indicate heat relief resources available in the community. The *collection map* provides regional locations that are collecting bottled water and other donations such as clothing, unopened sun block, and food items for those who are in need. The *hydration and refuge map* indicates regional locations that people can go to for water, refuge or both. The maps will be available on MAG's Website at www.azmag.gov.

Q: Where are the maps being distributed?

A: Heat Relief Maps will be distributed at public libraries, family service centers, food banks, shelters, municipalities, emergency rooms throughout the region, and by emergency responders.

Q: What are some important tips to avoid heat-related illness?

A: Some tips to avoid heat-related illness are:

- ✓ Increase fluid intake, regardless of activity level. Staying hydrated is extremely important.
- ✓ Limit exercise or outdoor activity between the hours of 11am and 3pm.
- ✓ When outdoors, wear a sunscreen with a minimum SPF 15 and re-apply often. Wear a hat, lightweight clothing and sunglasses.
- ✓ Rest frequently in shady or cool areas to give the body's temperature has a chance to recover and cool down.
- ✓ Never leave infants, children or pets inside a parked vehicle.
- ✓ Check on elderly neighbors to make sure their air conditioning is working and in use. Take advantage of free air-conditioning by visiting locations like shopping malls, the library or other heat refuge locations provided on the map.
- ✓ For other tips to stay safe and hydrated in the summer heat, go to the MAG Website at www.azmag.gov.

Q: What can people do if they want to help?

A: Donations of bottled water are needed. If you would like to contribute bottled water to the Heat Relief Network, you can donate to any of the regional collection sites listed on the collection map.

Never leave children or pets inside a parked vehicle.

Help to educate your friends and neighbors on the dangers of extreme heat.

Check on your elderly neighbors to ensure they are staying cool.

For additional information on regional heat relief efforts, please contact Brande Mead, MAG Human Services Program Manager at (602) 452-5060.