

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Kerri S. Mabee
Public Information Officer
Riverside University Health System
P: 951.467.7542 | E: k.mabee@ruhealth.org

Contact:

Nathan Hultgren
Public Information Officer & Marketing Manager
Department of Housing and Workforce Solutions
P: 951.201.3483 | E: NaHultgren@ruhealth.org

RUHS Public Health: Stay Safe in the Heat and Seek Cool Spaces When Possible

RIVERSIDE, CA (March 19, 2026) – As an unseasonable spring heatwave simmers in Riverside County, Riverside University Health System — Public Health (RUHS - PH) officials urge residents to take simple precautions to protect their health in response to elevated temperatures.

"Extreme heat can be dangerous for anyone, but particularly for seniors, young children, pregnant women and [those who work outdoors](#)," said Riverside County Public Health Officer Dr. Jennifer Chevinsky. "We urge everyone to take the rise in temperatures seriously by adopting protective health measures and seeking shade where they can."

Prevention tips include:

- Drink plenty of water—even if you don't feel thirsty.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- Avoid strenuous activity outdoors, take breaks and stay in the shade.
- Use a buddy system and check in with them regularly if you are outdoors for an extended period of time.
- Check on elderly neighbors, children and pets.
- Never leave children or pets inside a parked car, even for a short time.

Dr. Chevinsky adds that [heat-related illness](#) is a risk for individuals who are exposed to hot conditions over a longer period of time.

"For those who must work outdoors, we recommend that you limit your exposure during the hottest times of the day. Whenever possible, take water breaks and find relief in shady and cool areas," Dr. Chevinsky said.

Symptoms of heat stroke, the most serious heat-related illness, include confusion, loss of consciousness, hot and dry skin (though sweating may still occur in some cases) and seizures. While considered less severe than heat stroke, heat exhaustion can present with headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, thirst, heavy sweating and irritability. Both require prompt medical attention.

Air-conditioned cool centers hosted by [Community Action Partnership of Riverside County](#) are available throughout Riverside County for those needing relief from the heat. Libraries, community centers and malls are also options for anyone needing a quick cool down.

“Our cool centers are designed to keep Riverside County residents safe and comfortable without adding to their utility bills. This week’s extreme heat wave showed just how essential these spaces are, and we are incredibly grateful for the strong partnerships that make them possible. With 58 community sites and growing we have a network of dedicated organizations coming together to ensure every resident has a place of refuge during severe weather,” said Emma Perez-Singh, Deputy Director, Community Action Partnership of Riverside County.

Cool center sites' regular business hours vary by location and are not set by CAP Riverside, Perez-Singh added. Find a map of locations here: [Cool Centers | Community Action Partnership of Riverside County](#).

For information on additional resources, call 211 for assistance.

Read about the RUHS - Public Health Climate Justice Program: <https://www.ruhealth.org/public-health/programs/climate-justice>

For more information, visit www.ruhealth.org/ruhs-public-health.

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About Riverside University Health System – Public Health

Riverside University Health System – Public Health (RUHS - PH) serves as Riverside County’s public health department. RUHS-PH offers a range of services and programs to promote and protect the health of all county residents and visitors in service of the well-being of the community. RUHS includes the 439-bed Medical Center in Moreno Valley, Calif., 14 Community Health Centers across Riverside County, and Behavioral Health, which provides emergency and inpatient psychiatric care. Visit www.ruhealth.org to learn more.

About Community Action Partnership of Riverside County

Community Action Partnership of Riverside County (CAP Riverside) is a division of the County of Riverside’s Department of Housing and Workforce Solutions dedicated to empowering low-income individuals, families, and communities. Through education, energy assistance, wealth-building programs, Cool/Warm Centers, and advocacy, CAP Riverside works to reduce poverty, and create pathways to long-term self-sufficiency. Learn more at capriverside.org.