

NOAA'S NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE DEBUTS HEAT HEALTH WATCH/WARNING SYSTEM IN PARTS OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

The Cities of San Francisco and San Jose, along with neighboring Peninsula, East and South Bay near shore Communities join 18 other metropolitan areas in the United States where NOAA's National Weather Service is using a customized Heat Health Watch/Warning System to enhance its ability of issuing accurate and timely heat-related advisories, watches and warnings and inform the public to take action to avoid health risks associated with periods of unusually high heat.

The Heat Health Watch/Warning System is a collaborative tool that measures oppressive air affecting health. It is part of a national focus addressing the impact of this special hazard on urban centers. When unseasonably hot conditions occur, the San Francisco Bay Area Weather Forecast Office will issue excessive heat watches, warnings and advisories to alert people in the region to take precautions against the hot weather.

"Excessive heat is the top weather-related killer in the U.S., causing more fatalities per year than floods, lightning, tornadoes, hurricanes, winter storms, or extreme cold," said Retired Air Force Brig. Gen. [David L. Johnson](#), director of NOAA's National Weather Service.

"Heat can be a health hazard in the Bay Area and this new system provides heat information tailored specifically to our area," said David Soroka, warning coordination meteorologist at the San Francisco Bay Area weather forecast office. "People here are accustomed to a more temperate climate. When it gets unseasonably hot many people suffer, especially since many residences do not have air conditioning."

San Francisco/San Jose joins the list of cities with the Heat Health Watch/Warning System, which includes Chicago, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Cincinnati/Dayton, Houston, Jackson/Meridian, Lake Charles/Alexandria, Little Rock/Pine Bluff, Memphis/Tupelo, Minneapolis, New Orleans/Baton Rouge, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Portland, Seattle, St. Louis, Shreveport/Monroe, Washington/Baltimore and Yuma.

"The Heat Health Watch/Warning System is the first and only meteorological tool that identifies oppressive air masses that historically diminish people's health," said Laurence Kalkstein, Ph.D., research professor at the University of Miami's Synoptic Climatology Laboratory and developer of the warning system. "A custom system is developed for each urban area, based on specific meteorology for each locale as well as urban structure and demographics."

The San Francisco Bay Area weather forecast office is collaborating with the offices of emergency services and health departments in San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Alameda and Contra Costa Counties as well as the City of San Jose. This partnership will educate the community about the warning system and the risks of heat and safety measures to take during a hot spell.

NOAA, an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of the nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems ([GEOSS](#)), NOAA is working with its federal partners, 61 countries and the European Commission to develop a global network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

On the Web:

NOAA: <http://www.noaa.gov/>

NOAA National Weather Service in Monterey: <http://weather.gov/sanfrancisco>

National Weather Service Heat Safety: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/heat/index.shtml>

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