



Fairfax County's Extreme Heat Response

Health and Human Services Committee Meeting

Tom Barnett, Deputy Director, Housing & Community Development, Office to Prevent & End Homelessness

Jill Clark, HHS Policy and Planning Manager, Neighborhood & Community Services

June 13, 2023

Background

- NAACP contacted the Board in July 2022 about concerns for unsheltered residents in extreme heat.
- Workgroup was established in August 2022 to identify strategies to enhance the County's response.
- Memorandum with recommendations was sent to Board on March 9, 2023.
- Recommendations are being implemented this summer.

Extreme Heat Workgroup

- Composed of County staff, homeless services providers, faith community, and advocates.
 - Sarah Allen, Neighborhood and Community Services
 - Tom Barnett, Housing and Community Development
 - Ramona Carroll, Neighborhood and Community Services
 - Jill Clark, Neighborhood and Community Services
 - Jesse Habourn, Health Department
 - Jessica Hudson, Library
 - Carole Huell, FACETS
 - Keary Kincannon, Advocate/Retired Pastor at Rising Hope United Methodist Church
 - Seamus Mooney, Emergency Management and Security
 - Mary Paden, Fairfax NAACP
 - Jan Sacharko, New Hope Housing
 - Maura Williams, Cornerstones
- Additional County agencies participated on four committees, including CSB, FMD, DFS, OPA, Park Authority, DIT, and DOT.

Extreme Heat Workgroup

- Conducted a survey of unsheltered residents about their needs and how they handle extreme heat.
- Developed recommendations to enhance the County's response in four areas:
 1. Communications and outreach
 2. Transportation
 3. County infrastructure and response
 4. Supplies and distribution

Activation of Extreme Heat Response

- The Extreme Heat Response will be activated when the National Weather Service issues one of these alerts:

Heat Advisory: Issued when the heat index value is expected to reach 105 to 109 degrees within the next 12-24 hours.

Excessive Heat Watch: Issued when there is a potential for the heat index value to reach or exceed 110 degrees within next 24-48 hours.

Excessive Heat Warning: Issued when the heat index value is expected to reach or exceed 110 degrees within the next 12-24 hours. An Excessive Heat Warning may be issued for lower criteria if it is early in the season or during a multi-day heat wave.

Communications & Outreach Enhancements

- Developed a specific Fairfax Alerts group for homeless services providers and unsheltered residents to receive notifications of heat advisories, which will include a link to the County's Extreme Heat Resources webpage.
- Conducting a robust public outreach campaign to encourage unsheltered residents to sign up for Fairfax Alerts and inform them about cooling resources.
- Created posters and flyers (in 8 languages) highlighting cooling resources, which are being distributed at drop-in sites and other locations that provide services to unsheltered residents.

⚠️ If you or someone you know is having a medical emergency related to heat, call 911.

BE PREPARED FOR EXTREME HEAT

Stay Cool In Air Conditioned Spaces

During extreme heat, stay in air conditioned spaces, especially between the hottest part of the day (10 a.m. - 3 p.m.). For a list of Fairfax County facilities that are open to the public during heat events, scan this QR code or visit: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/topics/extreme-heat-resources

Follow These Safety Tips During Heat Emergencies:

- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Stay inside and out of the heat.
- Dress in lightweight clothing.
- Never leave children, seniors or pets alone in a car.

Stay Informed with Fairfax Alerts!

Did you know that you can sign up for important emergency alerts and updates during a heat emergency? Fairfax Alerts can be sent via phone, text, email and more.

Subscriptions to select:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emergency Alerts 2. Severe Weather <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Excessive Heat Warning ii. Excessive Heat Watch iii. Heat Advisory 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Office to Prevent and End Homelessness <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Homelessness Resources and Information b. Homelessness Cooling & Heating Resources
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To sign up, scan QR code or visit: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts

Need Additional Assistance?

Coordinated Services Planning CSP connects Fairfax County residents to county and community-based services and resources. Please call 703-222-0880 for more information.

Heat Exhaustion

ACT FAST

- Move to a cooler area
- Loosen clothing
- Sip cool water
- Seek medical help if symptoms don't improve.

Dizziness
Thirst
Heavy Sweating
Nausea
Weakness

Heat Stroke

ACT FAST

CALL 911

- Move person to a cooler area
- Loosen clothing and remove extra layers
- Cool with water or ice

Confusion
Dizziness
Becomes Unconscious

Heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not given.

Where a TTY number is not indicated, use 711/Virginia Relay. Reasonable accommodations made upon request; call 703-324-7329. A Fairfax County, Virginia publication. Printed 5/2023.

Transportation Enhancements

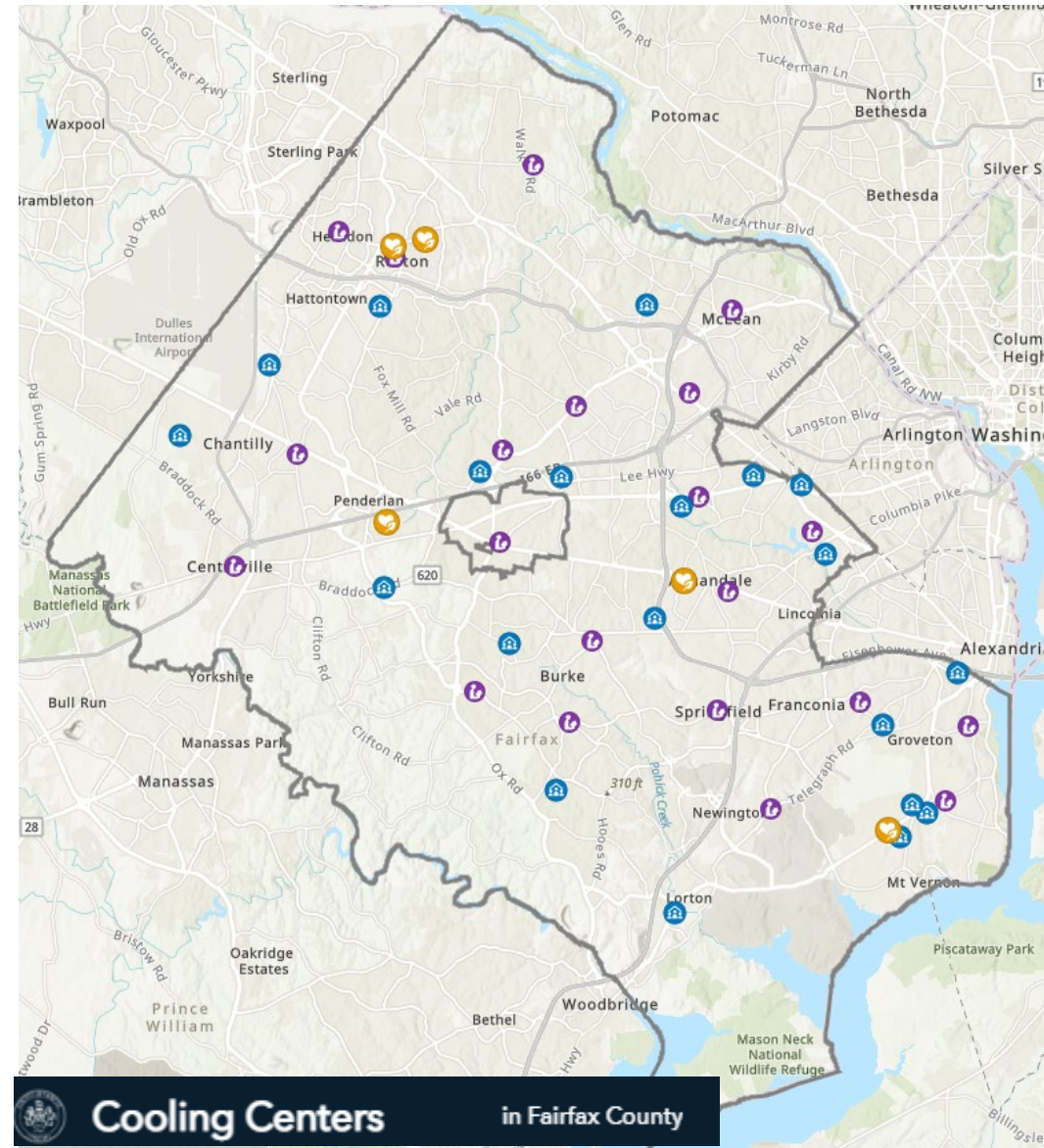
- Free Fairfax Connector bus passes to get to a cooling center, drop-in center, or weather-related overflow shelter.
- Free pre-loaded TOPS cards are available to unsheltered residents who cannot use Connector bus so they can use other modes of transportation to get to a shelter or cooling center.



County Infrastructure and Response Enhancements

- All County facilities that are open to the public are available for residents to use for cooling.
- 47 facilities have been designated as cooling centers, including libraries, community centers, Rec Centers, and human services offices.
- Features of designated cooling centers:
 - Staff trained on how to provide a welcoming experience.
 - Set-aside space with seating.
 - Supplies, including water, sunscreen, insect repellent, and bus passes.

County Infrastructure and Response Enhancements



Supply and Distribution Enhancements

- Supplies requested from survey respondents have been purchased, including handheld fans, reusable/collapsible water bottles, sun hats, cooling towels, electrolyte drink powder packets, sunscreen, and insect repellent.
- Being distributed by outreach workers, as well as available at drop-in centers, shelters, and other locations that provide services to residents experiencing homelessness.
- Water, sunscreen, insect repellent, and bus passes will be available at the designated County cooling centers.

Next Steps

- Will track usage of designated cooling centers to identify areas of the County and/or types of facilities that there was higher usage.
- Survey unsheltered residents to determine if enhancements were effective.
- Debrief with County agencies and community partners in early fall.
- Report back to Board on results.