

## **Stay Safe and Healthy This Summer!**

The Fairfield Department of Health advises residents to stay safe and healthy this summer by avoiding preventable heat-related illness. From 1979 to 2003, excessive heat exposure caused 8,015 deaths in this country, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. During this same period, more people died from extreme heat than from hurricanes, lightning, tornadoes, floods and earthquakes combined!

**Heat-related deaths and illness are preventable!** People need to be aware that they can have heat related illness when their bodies are unable to compensate and properly cool themselves. Under some conditions, sweating just can't cool the body. When this happens, the body temperature rises rapidly, which can damage the brain or other organs.

When the humidity is high sweat will not evaporate as quickly. Age, obesity, fever, dehydration, heart disease, poor circulation, sunburn, some prescription drugs and alcohol use also affect the body's ability to cool itself.

During hot weather, use common sense. Practice the following:

- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Replace salt and minerals because sweating removes salt and minerals from the body.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose fitting clothing and a wide brimmed hat.
- Use sunscreen and reapply according to the directions
- Schedule your outdoor activities carefully and pace yourself
- If you can, stay indoors in an air-conditioned place.
- Use a buddy system if you need to be outside working in the heat. If you are older, have a friend or relative check on you twice a day.
- Monitor those at high risk including infants and young children, those over 65, those who work outside, people who are ill and those who are overweight.
- Never leave children, older people or pets in a parked car, even with the windows cracked open.