

## **Appendix J Extreme Heat Emergencies**

### **PRIMARY AGENCIES**

Mohave County Emergency Management  
Mohave County Public Health  
Mohave County Sheriff's Office  
Mohave County Parks  
Mohave County Community Services  
Incorporated Cities  
Mohave County Animal Shelter  
National Weather Service

### **SUPPORT AGENCIES**

American Red Cross  
The Salvation Army  
Mohave County Community Organizations Active in Disaster  
Community Emergency Response Teams  
Medical Reserve Corps  
Local Homeless Shelters and Food Banks  
Faith Based Organizations

## **I. Purpose, Scope, Situations, and Assumptions**

### ***Situation***

- A. Periods of prolonged excessive heat can result in life-threatening conditions for a significant portion of the population, particularly among vulnerable individuals without access to air-conditioning. In 2024, Arizona recorded over 900 confirmed heat-related fatalities, with Maricopa County alone accounting for 602 of those deaths.
- B. By recognizing a heat wave in its developmental stages, the County can take actions that will enable citizens to avoid life-threatening conditions.
- C. Violent summer thunderstorms can be particularly serious. In addition to increasing the humidity, they can produce power outages that deprive large segments of the population access to residential air conditioning.

### ***Purpose***

- To establish a program that will both educate the population about how to cope with a heat wave and, when necessary, provide protection from its effects to vulnerable segments of the population.

## **II. Concept of Operations**

Mohave County Public Health (MCDPH) and Mohave County Emergency Management (MCEM) will issue news releases to inform the public of how to deal with the heat wave. The initial news releases will occur prior to the anticipated start of sustained high temperatures, and additional news releases will occur when a life-threatening heat emergency is imminent.

- The Las Vegas office of the National Weather Service (NWS) issues two types of heat-related messages, based on several factors. The combination of factors that triggers these heat-related messages vary according to the time of year. For example, a combination of factors that would result in an extreme heat warning in early May might not result in one in mid-July. These two NWS products are:
  - Extreme Heat Watch – issued when conditions are likely to result in a life-threatening heat emergency within the next 24 to 72 hours.
  - Extreme Heat Warning – issued when a life-threatening heat emergency exists or is imminent.
- During the summer months, a power outage could occur and create a heat emergency even though NWS extreme heat watches or warnings have not been issued.
- Other components of this appendix may be implemented when the National Weather Service issues an **extreme heat watch** or an **extreme heat warning** for Mohave County, or a power outage causes a heat emergency.
- MCEM, or the MCEOC if activated, will ensure implementation of the activities discussed in this appendix.

### **III. Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities**

- **The Chairman of the Board of Supervisors** will declare a local emergency if deemed to be necessary.
- **Mohave County Emergency Management will:**
  - Ensure that the provisions of this appendix are implemented.
  - When the NWS issues an **extreme heat watch or warning, or a power outage creates a heat emergency:**
    - Notify all County departments and Offices that an extreme heat emergency exists and that the provisions of this appendix are to be implemented.

- Collect information regarding actions taken by the cities and towns, and Tribes to ensure that affected County departments and Offices are made aware of those actions.
  - When necessary, assist in the coordination of Mohave County Community Organizations Active in Disasters (MCCOAD) volunteers for staffing shelters, hydration stations, volunteer phone banks, distributing informational flyers to affected populations, and other related activities.
- When NWS issues an **extreme heat warning**, or a power outage creates a heat emergency:
- Activate the County DOCs if necessary.
  - Coordinate with other departments and agencies tasked in this annex to ensure completion of assigned responsibilities.
  - Compile, maintain, and distribute listings of cooling centers, hydration stations, and shelters established in response to the extreme heat emergency.
  - When requested during an extreme heat warning that lasts for an extended period, assist affected cities, towns, and tribes in setting up and operating volunteer reception centers to process and employ spontaneous unaffiliated volunteers as resources allow.
  - In the event the Sheriff's Office is unable to provide security support during an extreme heat emergency, Emergency Management will coordinate alternative security services. This may include support for County-operated cooling centers, hydration stations, and other designated facilities.

• **Mohave County Public Health may:**

- **Upon issuance of an Extreme Heat Watch or Warning**, Public Health may issue media releases to provide guidance on how to prepare for significant heat wave events. These media releases will be issued as needed throughout the heat season, based on severity and public health impact. When applicable, messaging may be aligned with public information issued by cities, towns, or Tribes to ensure consistency.
- **When an extreme heat event results in a power outage** – whether caused by system overload or preemptive utility shutoffs – creating a public health emergency, Public Health may:
  - Increase surveillance and reporting efforts related to heat-related injuries and fatalities, in collaboration with the Medical Examiner's office,

area hospitals, and ADHS. This may include situational awareness updates, patient monitoring trends, and collaboration with emergency medical services.

- Notify area hospitals of the extreme heat trends and power conditions so they may take these factors into consideration when discharging patients. This notification will also help providers anticipate an uptick in patient visits due to heat-related complications.

- **May** assess the need to support non-Public Health-operated emergency cooling stations with available equipment and resources. Assistance may be provided in collaboration with Emergency Management, medical centers, and other jurisdictions, and only as resources allow. Public Health may also contribute to broader regional coordination during extreme heat emergencies.

- **Mohave County Sheriff's Office may:**

- When the NWS issues an **extreme heat warning or a power outage creates a heat emergency**, the Sheriff's Office may assist with the following actions, if requested and resources permit:

- May provide limited security support at cooling centers, hydration stations, or other designated locations established by the County during the emergency.

- Sheriff's Office may activate Sheriff's Posse/SAR personnel or volunteers to assist with manning cooling centers, conducting welfare checks in neighborhoods without power, and supporting logistics such as delivering ice and water to hydration stations.

- **Mohave County Parks:**

- Provide if available, public access to County Parks Department managed facilities during an emergency to facilitate an emergency reception center, cooling station, shelter or incident management command post when needed.

- Provide available staff and volunteers to assist with facility operations during an emergency shelter operation, as needed.

- Provide other County Parks Department equipment and supplies as needed to support a sheltering operation.

- **Mohave County Community Services will:**

- When NWS issues an **extreme heat watch**, post and distribute public health related extreme heat guidance materials at Community Services offices.
- When NWS issues an **extreme heat warning or a power outage creates a heat emergency**, assist with distribution of donated water through established service centers and program activities (e.g. Community Actions Programs, Head Start, Workforce development One-Stop Centers, home-delivered meals and transportation services).
- **Other Departments will:**
  - Post heat tips for staff.
  - If the NWS issues an **extreme heat watch or warning**, encourage field staff to monitor conditions of citizens most likely to suffer during a prolonged heat wave (e.g. elderly, homebound, homeless, etc.). Field staff should call 911 if an emergency is encountered; otherwise, notify MCEM.
  - Support Emergency Operations as necessary.
- **Incorporated cities, towns and tribal communities have:**
  - Facilities that can be of assistance during a heat wave emergency, such as senior centers, which can afford seniors a place to escape the heat and can also serve as distribution points for donated water.
  - Homeless shelters run by volunteer organizations that can assist in providing water and cooling stations for the homeless.
- **Mohave County and Western Arizona Humane Society will:**
  - Work with local veterinarians to provide hot weather pet care information to the public.
  - Implement hot weather care procedures for animals in custody.
  - Coordinate with agencies providing shelter services to care for the pets of evacuees.
  - Shelter pets in place when possible.
  - Provide temporary shelter for animals that cannot be sheltered in place.

- Coordinate with the American Red Cross if a reception and care center is established and establish a temporary veterinary evacuation center. Support the Red Cross in providing volunteers, pet kennels, food, etc.

- **The National Weather Service will:**

- When an **extreme heat watch or warning** is issued, alert the Mohave County Division of Emergency Management Manager and the Mohave County Public Health Department.

- **The American Red Cross (Grand Canyon Chapter) will:**

- Establish and operate shelters, if necessary. This effort will generally focus on facilities capable of housing many people to minimize the number of shelters that need to be opened. The American Red Cross can either provide or arrange for the provision of food, water, and basic nursing needs at shelters. Assistance from outside agencies will be needed if large quantities of water are needed, and assistance in staffing the shelters will also be needed, particularly for long-term events.

- **The Salvation Army (TSA) may be tasked to:**

- In coordination with other MCCOAD members, maintain, deploy, and operate hydration stations, which will include both shade tents and water distribution. These stations will be established daily, during daylight hours, at locations identified through MCEM and coordinated with local municipalities or private organizations. TSA will provide volunteers and supplies in support.
- If necessary and when requested through MCEM, coordinate donations management activities in support of this annex. Such activities may include the effort to solicit specific in-kind gifts, such as water, from the public. Additional activities include the collection and temporary storage of donations. TSA will coordinate the transportation and distribution of the collected goods with the various agencies included in this annex.

- **Mohave County Community Organizations Active in Disaster (MCCOAD)** may coordinate volunteer agencies that can offer shelter, food, hydration stations, and transportation assistance to the homeless and other special needs populations.

- **CERT and MRC volunteers** may provide volunteers to assist in operating shelters, operating phone banks, distributing informational brochures and fliers, and other related activities.

- **Utilities** may offer water, ice, and establish cooling stations for affected customers when power interruptions lead to extended outages in their service areas.