ERIE COUNTY
EXTREME HEAT SURVEY



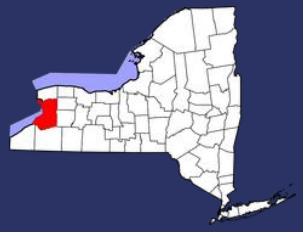
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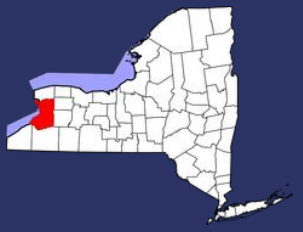
Erie County Department of Health

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Erie County

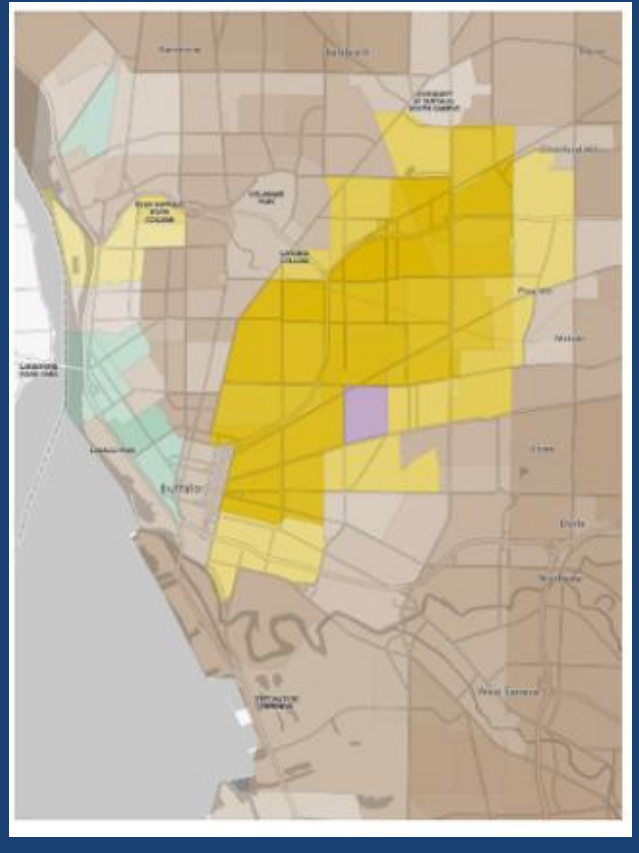


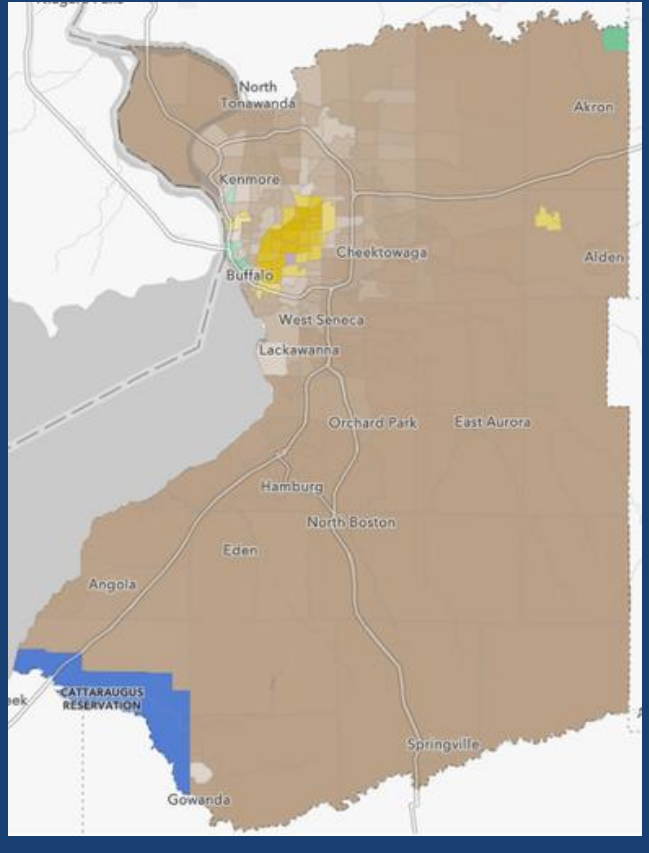
- 1,043 square miles
- Population: 946,741
- County seat: Buffalo
  - Population: 274,613
  - 2nd largest NY city
- Bordered by Lake Erie, Niagara River, Canada
- Urban, suburban, and rural areas



Erie County by Race

Race and Ethnicity - Census Tracts 2015-2019
Predominant Category





- Hispanic or Latino (of Any Race)
- White Alone, not Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American Alone, Not Hispanic or Latino
- Asian alone, not Hispanic or Latino
- American Indian and Alaska Native Alone, Not Hispanic or Latino
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone, Not Hispanic or Latino
- Two or More Races, not Hispanic or Latino
- Some Other Race Alone, not Hispanic or Latino
- No

Strength of Predominance

> 96

< 13

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Project Scope

The Erie County Extreme Heat Survey will inform Erie County climate adaptation and public health strategies.



Project Partner

Collaboration with Delavan Grider Community Center encourages participation from residents of a historically underserved neighborhood on the East Side of Buffalo with increased extreme heat vulnerabilities due to systemic racism, redlining, and disinvestment.



Project Deliverables

- Portable USB misting fans will be distributed to incentivize survey participation in a community experiencing survey fatigue and address systemic inequities in access to air conditioning and other extreme heat vulnerabilities.
- Extreme heat preparedness information will also be shared.



LET'S GET READY FOR SUMMER HEAT

Edition 08 | HEALTH EQUITY BEAT
A HEALTH EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

Summers in Erie County are getting hotter. The number of days it is warmer than 90°F (32°C) increases each year. Rising summer temperatures can impact our health. Sun and heat can make working and playing outside uncomfortable and unsafe. Planning for hot weather will keep you cool, safe and healthy this summer.

WHY SHOULD WE PREPARE?

Hot summer weather can cause health problems called heat illnesses. Heat illness can include **heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.**

Everyone can be affected by heat illness. Some people are more likely to be affected by heat, including:

- babies and young children
- older adults and elders
- people dependent on others for care

And people who:

- live alone
- have health conditions like high blood pressure
- work or live outside
- are pregnant
- live in upper-level apartments
- do not have air conditioning
- take antihistamines, antipsychotics, beta-blockers (heart medicine) and diuretics (water pills)

Pets are susceptible to heat illness, too.

PREVENT HEAT EMERGENCIES

Here are tips to help you stay cool and safe:

- **LOOK** at the weather report. Pay attention to when the hottest part of the day will be and plan around it.
- **DRINK** more water than usual. Do not wait until you feel thirsty to drink.
- **WEAR** loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing. Cotton and linen are best.
- **FIND** shade where you can. Bring a hat or umbrella.
- **STAY** in air-conditioned buildings as much as possible. Look for cooling centers in your area.
- **AVOID** using your oven or stove to cook.
- **EAT** hydrating foods like melon and cucumber.
- **TAKE** cool showers or baths.
- **TAKE** breaks when working or playing outside.
- **AVOID** or limit intense physical activity.
- **CHECK** on your loved ones, neighbors and anyone who lives alone.
- **KNOW** the early signs of heat illness.
- **DO NOT WAIT** for a heat cramp to start cooling down. Stay cool from the beginning.

All heat emergencies are preventable!

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YOUR HEALTH & HEAT

Everyone manages heat differently. Chronic health conditions, medications and stress can make it difficult to stay cool in hot weather. Learn more about heat-related illnesses below.

HEAT RASH

Skin irritation caused by heat and sweat. Symptoms include painful bumps or a red rash on the skin. Keep the rash area dry to soothe.

HEAT CRAMPS

Caused by loss of salt and moisture in the body, usually due to extra sweat. Cramps feel like pain or spasm in a muscle. Drink liquids and massage gently to relieve pain.

DEHYDRATION

When your body uses or loses more fluids than you take in. Signs and symptoms include dry mouth, dizziness, extreme thirst and fainting. Can be reversed by drinking more fluids.

HEAT EXHAUSTION

Weakness due to serious dehydration. Signs and symptoms: heavy sweating, headache, clammy skin and nausea. Rest, drink water and seek medical care if symptoms continue.

HEAT STROKE

Serious illness due to high body temperature. Signs and symptoms include fast heart rate, hot skin, confusion, slurred speech, irrational behavior and fainting. Any of the above illnesses may also occur. Call 911 for emergency medical care. Move the person to shade, hydrate (if alert) and cool with wet cloths.

FIRST AID



If you think someone is suffering from heat illness:

- **Call 911** for emergency care if the person is not alert or if lips and fingernails are blue.
- **Move** the person to rest in a shaded place and fan them to cool down.
- **Hydrate** with a cool drink if they are alert enough to drink safely.
- **Apply** cool, wet cloths to the skin or soak clothing in cool water. Focus on the back of the neck, wrists and forehead.
- **Massage** muscles gently for muscle cramps.
- **Seek** medical care if any symptoms persist.

OVEREXERTION

Easy does it! Extra strain on your body due to physical activity during hot weather can lead to exhaustion and heat stroke. Plan to take breaks.



WHEN IT IS HOT...

- **Do not wait for signs of heat illness** to take steps to stay cool and hydrated. Prevent heat illness by preparing for the weather each day.
- **Do not leave children in hot cars.** When it is 75°F outside, it is at least 105°F inside a car.
- **Avoid alcohol AND caffeine.** These substances make it hard to cool down. They can also cause dehydration.
- **Do not use rubbing alcohol on skin.** It can cause an increase in body temperature.
- **Know the side effects** of medications you take. Heat may impact how you feel.
- **Do not use medicines used to treat fever,** such as aspirin, acetaminophen or NSAIDS. These medications do not work on high body temperatures due to heat stroke.

DRINK!



Prevent or reverse dehydration by replacing salt and moisture in your body. Hydrate with water. Look for a sports drink with low or no sugar. Make a salted drink by adding one teaspoon of salt per quart of water. Eat hydrating foods like melon.

SEE YOUR PEE

The color of your urine mixed in toilet water can tell you how hydrated you are. Keep track of the color throughout the day and keep drinking water, even when you are hydrated.



DRINK WATER EVEN IF YOUR COLOR IS LIGHT

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WEATHER WATCH

Hot weather warnings are reported by the news and local government. The weather forecast is an informed guess of temperature and moisture in the air. Here are some terms to look out for.

HEAT INDEX

A number that represents what the outside temperature **feels like** on your skin. It is the actual outside temperature and relative humidity combined. It is shown as a temperature.

MORE INFO ABOUT HEAT INDEX
To learn more about how heat and humidity can feel in our bodies, visit weather.gov/safety.

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

The amount of water vapor in the air shown as a percent. High humidity can feel sticky. Low humidity can feel dry.

EXCESSIVE HEAT WATCH

Temperatures might become extra hot in the next 12-48 hours. Prepare to stay cool and hydrated. Look for shade.

EXCESSIVE HEAT ADVISORY

Temperatures will be extra hot in the next 12-48 hours. Find shade and take extra steps to stay cool and hydrated. Consider limiting or cancelling outdoor work and play.

DID YOU KNOW?
The hottest time of day during summer is between 3pm-5pm.

WORKING OUTSIDE?

If your job requires you to work outside in the heat, your employer should give you time for **acclimation**. Acclimation is the slow exposure to heat over a few days. This is so your body can get used to the heat safely.

PLAYING OUTSIDE?

Whether you are hiking a trail or relaxing in a park, it is important to remember to consider how heat will impact the time you spend outside.



SWIMMING

When cooling down in water, take steps to prevent drowning. Children under 5 and teenagers have the highest drowning rates. **Never swim alone!** Find safety tips for swimming and boating here: on.ny.gov/45rt4GO



WEAR SUNSCREEN

No matter your skin type, UV rays from the sun can cause dangerous damage to your skin. Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the U.S. Sunscreen can prevent damage.

KEEP COOL IN YOUR COMMUNITY

We are all in this together. When it is hot, take extra care to check on loved ones, neighbors and elders. Invite your neighbors to walk around the mall. Meet with friends at a splash pad. Spend an afternoon at an Erie County library. Ride an air conditioned NFTA bus to see a friend. All Erie County parks have shelters with shade cover. Trees offer lots of shade, too. **Have a picnic!** Bring foods that hydrate and cool your body. Here are some options:

- melon
- apples
- tomatoes
- celery
- beans & lentils
- cherries
- grapes
- pears
- mangoes
- lettuce
- fennel
- radish
- greens
- berries
- cardamom

WHEN TO USE A FAN



An electric fan is a great way to stay cool. Put the fan in front of an open window so it blows cool air in from the outside. Do not use a fan if the temperature inside or outside of your home is 95 degrees or higher. It will blow hot air and can become dangerous.

DON'T FORGET PETS

When it comes to extreme heat, our furry friends need the same care we do. Offer pets extra water and shade when it is hot. Cool overheated pets with ice packs and ice cubes. Never leave a pet in a car unattended, even for short trips.

ERIE COUNTY HEAP COOLING ASSISTANCE

Did you know? The Erie County Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) offers cooling assistance to eligible residents. You can receive up to $800 to buy and install an air conditioning unit in your home or apartment.

- The HEAP application opens up in May each year.
- The HEAP application closes when funds run out.

Call to apply: (716) 858-7644
Apply in person: 460 Main St, Buffalo NY 14202
Check eligibility: www.erie.gov/heap/cooling-benefits



SUMMER SAFETY RESOURCES

COOLING SHELTERS

When temperatures hit 85 degrees, Erie County will open up extra community spaces for people to cool down. To find a cooling shelter or other air conditioned community space near you:
Call WNY 211 Dial 211
Visit erie.gov/staycool

READY ERIE APP

The **ReadyErie preparedness app** can help you plan for emergencies.
Visit www.erie.gov/readyerie



FREE SAFETY TRAINING

Erie County First Aid & Stop the Bleed Training	(716) 858-7109
Erie County Hands Only CPR training & CPR resources	(716) 858-7690
Erie County Opioid Overdose Recognition & Naloxone (Narcan) Use Trainings	(716) 858-8701

Upstate New York Poison Prevention Training
upstate.edu/poison/community/train

NYS CITIZEN PREPAREDNESS CORPS

New York State offers classes to help you prepare for emergencies. Learn how to plan, build supply kits, increase awareness and get involved in emergency response. Take a FREE class in your local area and receive a FREE emergency supply bag. To find a class near you, visit: www.dhses.ny.gov/citizen-preparedness-corps
For videos available in 13 languages, visit: bit.ly/NYSemergencymultilingual

THIS IS A PUBLICATION OF THE
ERIE COUNTY OFFICE OF HEALTH EQUITY

This publication is available in 5 languages on our website and in print.

The Erie County Office of Health Equity's vision is for everyone in Erie County to achieve maximum health and wellness. The Office of Health Equity is located within the Erie County Department of Health.

Want to learn more?
Visit www.erie.gov/health-equity
Email us at HealthEquity@erie.gov

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www3.erie.gov/health/extreme-heat

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Erie County Dept of Health

Locations | Programs and Health Topics | Permits/Applications/Forms | Service Requests/Complaints | Press/Alerts/Hotlines

Frequently Requested Info

Extreme Heat

Hot weather can lead to heat-related deaths and illnesses - conditions that are preventable. Hundreds of people in the United States die because of extreme heat conditions every year. Know the signs and symptoms of heat-related illness and learn how to protect yourself and those around you from extreme heat.

Share this information with people who may not see it or who need help understanding it.

Place to Stay Cool in Erie County

When the heat rises, there are many places to go to cool down! Find a list of places to stay cool in Erie County at erie.gov/staycool.

Related: Summer Health and Safety for Kids



What is Extreme Heat?



Check out the Erie County Office of Health Equity publication "Let's Get Ready for Summer Heat." ***None of the information on this page should be used as a substitute for direct medical advice from your health care provider.***

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Best Practices

- Partnering with a trusted community organization with deep community roots
- Meeting the community where they are at by coming to them
- Incentivizing survey participation to address over-surveying and survey fatigue among residents of the community of focus
  - Utilizing an incentive that can be used to help address the inequities that are the focus of the project
- Utilizing plain language in informational materials

Lessons Learned



- Our county's internal processes make short grant periods like this challenging.
- Ordering the desired misting fans was delayed due to the county's purchasing processes as the items went to bid.
- Due to these factors, a grant extension was required.



Thank you, NYSACHO!