

EDITORIAL

with Frances Learment

Stay cool, wet and compassionate

We waited all year for nice weather, and now, in the dog days of summer, the sweltering temperatures and rising Humidex do not spell fun in the sun for some with an increased risk of heat stroke, a sometimes fatal extreme increase in body temperature.

For most, it is not hard to stay cool, and there are workable tips for outdoor workers. Experts say avoiding dehydration and suspending vigorous physical activities are key to preventing heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Infants, the elderly, athletes and outdoor workers are at greatest risk of heat stroke and heat-related illness. Can't avoid going out? Up your fluids – no alcohol, pop or coffee – and replenish electrolytes, like sodium. Take frequent breaks; wear a hat, and lightweight loose clothes.

Heat rash is one sure sign of heat-related illness; another is heat cramps, painful muscle spasms in the arms, legs, or abdomen. Treatment means calling 911, then cooling the victim by finding or creating shade, removing clothing, applying water to promote sweating and evaporation, and placing ice packs under the armpits and groin. Provide liquids continue until the body temperature drops to 101 to 102 F (38.3 to 38.8 C).

In Acton, the Town's cooling centres at the River Street library and Acton arena/community centre offer heat relief during regular hours. The Superior Glove splash pad in Prospect Park is operating with extended 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. hours during the Heat Alert issued by Halton on Monday, and extended to Wednesday at press time.

The Town urges the public to call or visit family and neighbours who are at risk this summer. An easy solution. Maybe, they can talk about the weather.

Staggering statistics – solutions are easy

On Monday, a father left his nine-month-old daughter in a car unattended for 15 minutes while he was in the Oakville Home Depot getting food. On Monday it was 97 degrees Fahrenheit plus humidex. Thankfully, alert shoppers spotted the child and called police along with EMS, and the child is safe. The father has been charged with child abandonment.

Less than a month ago, a two-year-old was left for an undisclosed time in a car during extreme heat. The circumstances of how the young boy was left, have not been disclosed. The child is dead and his grandmother has been charged with criminal negligence causing death and failing to provide the necessities of life. A family is destroyed.

Twice in the last two weeks in town, I have seen animals left in cars during the heat of summer. Thankfully, windows were open a bit, however, even that can be dangerous. Last week, an acquaintance saw a young child, maybe five-years-old, in an unattended locked car, thankfully again with windows slightly open in a parking lot at a retail location in town.

Police and public health officials warn people that



By Angela Tyler

internal temperatures in vehicles can soar in the summertime months, as high as 50 C in as little as 10 minutes.

The numbers from kidsandcars.org, a non-profit organization to child safety, preventing injuries and death to children in or around motor vehicles, are staggering in the last decade:

- Child vehicular heat stroke deaths for 2013: 21 (+ 2 in Canada)
- 2012: 33
- 2011: 33
- 2010: 49
- 2009: 33
- As of 5/21/13, well over 650
- Average number of child vehicular heat stroke deaths per year since 1998: 38 (one every 9 days)
- The highest number of fatalities for a one-year time period took place in 2010: 49

The above are American statistics. Canada, sadly, does not have these statis-

tics available.

With all the media coverage of the fatality of the little boy in Milton, I was disgusted to hear about the baby on Monday in Oakville. We need to do everything we can do ensure children, persons unable to help themselves, whether elderly or disabled, along with pets are NOT left in vehicles especially during the extreme heat we are experiencing.

These are things we need to remember along with educating others about this topic:

1. No exceptions, not matter how brief. Simple DON'T DO IT!
2. Know what can go wrong.
3. Bystanders – get involved! CALL 9-1-1
4. Remind yourself – sometimes kids fall asleep, people get busy with their lives – remember your passengers
5. Prevent children from wandering into unattended parked cars. If you've parked it, lock it and make keys inaccessible.

Two children have died in Canada this year from heat stroke after being in unattended in a vehicle. Let's not have a third life taken senselessly.

PAST PAGES



TEN YEARS AGO

• The Syndicate Housing, five semi-detached houses on Bower Avenue – important evidence of Acton's industrial heritage – will become the Town's first Heritage District, as recommended by Heritage Halton Hills.

• The sudden and unexplained resignation of Halton Hills CAO Steve Andrews leaves the Town in an awkward position. The Municipal Act does not allow it to hire – or fire – top staff in time to meet a September deadline in an election year.

FIVE YEARS AGO

• Members of the Rockwood Knights of Columbus placed a memorial stone at a rest stop west of the village where the body of an unidentified woman was dumped in 2005.

• Acton Councillor Clark Somerville called for additional money now to help pay for more psychiatric support for children and adolescents, who currently must wait up to six months, and travel to Oakville or Burlington for help.



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