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Wisconsin Heat Awareness Day
June 9, 2011

(MADISON) – Heat can kill. That’s why Wisconsin Emergency Management and the National Weather Service are reminding people of the dangers associated with extreme heat and to promote safety measures.

Heat is the number one weather-related killer in the United States. In 2010, excessive heat claimed 138 lives across the country.

In 1995 two major killer heat waves affected most of Wisconsin resulting in 154 heat-related deaths and over 300 heat-related illnesses. Summer heat waves have been the biggest weather-related killers in Wisconsin for the past 50 years, far exceeding tornadoes and severe storms.

To help keep cool this summer, here are some tips to keep safe in hot weather:

1. **Never leave children, disabled persons, or pets in a parked car – even briefly.** Temperatures in a car can become life threatening within minutes. On an 80-degree day, the temperature inside a car even with the windows cracked slightly can reach 100 degrees in less than 10 minutes!
2. **Keep your living space cool.** Cover windows to keep the sun from shining in. If you don’t have an air conditioner open windows to let air circulate. When it’s hotter than 95 degrees use fans to blow hot air out of the window rather than to blow hot air on your body. Basements or ground floors are often cooler than upper floors.

3. **Slow down and limit physical activity.** Plan outings or exertion for the early morning or after dark when temperatures are cooler.
4. **Drink plenty of water and eat lightly.** Don't wait for thirst, but instead drink plenty of water throughout the day. Avoid alcohol or caffeine and stay away from hot, heavy meals.
5. **Wear lightweight, loose-fitting, light-colored clothing.** Add a hat or umbrella to keep your head cool...and don't forget sunscreen!
6. **Don't stop taking medication unless your doctor says you should.** Take extra care to stay cool and ask your doctor or pharmacist for any special heat advice.
7. **Infants should drink breast milk or formula** to get the right balance of water, salts and energy. You may supplement your infant's fluids with an additional 4 to 8 ounces of water per day, but don't dilute formula beyond what the instructions say (unless instructed by your doctor).
8. **Taking a cool shower or bath will cool you down.** A shower or bath will actually work faster than an air conditioner. Applying cold wet rags to the neck, head and limbs also cools down the body quickly.

People at higher risk of a heat-related illness include:

- Older adults
- Infants and young children
- People with chronic heart or lung problems
- People with disabilities
- Overweight persons
- Those who work outdoors or in hot settings
- Users of some medications, especially those taken for mental disorders, movement disorder, allergies, depression, and heart or circulatory problems
- People who are isolated that don't know when or how to cool off – or when to call for help

SYMPTOMS OF HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS AND WHAT TO DO

- *Heat Cramps* - cramps or muscle spasms in the abdomen, arms or legs.

Solution: Stop activity. Cool down, drink clear juice or sports drink.

- *Heat Exhaustion* - heavy sweating, paleness, muscle cramps, weakness, dizziness, headache, nausea, fainting.

Solution: Cool down, seek medical attention.

- *Heat Stroke* - extremely high body temperature, red, hot, dry skin, rapid pulse, throbbing headache, dizziness, nausea, confusion, unconsciousness.

Solution: Call 911 and cool the victim with shower or hose until help arrives.

(Courtesy: Wisconsin Department of Health Services)

For more information, visit <http://readywisconsin.wi.gov> and click on our Heat Awareness section.



National Weather Service Heat Wave Program in Wisconsin

1. **Outlook Statement** – Issued 2 to 7 days in advance of when Heat Advisory or Excessive Heat Warning conditions are anticipated. Issued as a Hazardous Weather Outlook (HWO). Broadcasted on NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards, and posted on NWS web sites (www.weather.gov).
2. **Heat Advisory** – Issued 6 to 24 hours in advance of any 24-hour period in which daytime heat index (HI) values of 100 degrees or more and/or when air temperatures are expected to be 95 degrees or higher. If four consecutive days of these conditions are expected, then the Excessive Heat Warning will be issued.
3. **Excessive Heat Watch** – Issued generally 12 to 48 hours in advance of any 24-hour period in which daytime heat index (HI) values are expected to be 105 degrees or higher and nighttime HI values will be 75 degrees or higher.
4. **Excessive Heat Warning** – Issued 6 to 24 hours in advance of any occurrence of a 48-hour period in which daytime heat index (HI) values are expected to be 105 degrees or higher and nighttime HI values will be 75 degrees or higher.

For additional information about heat awareness, contact your local public health department, county emergency management director or the National Weather Service.



Wisconsin Weather Related Fatalities (1982-2010)

Year	Tornado	Wind	Hail	Flooding	Lightning	Heat Waves	Winter Storms	Cold Waves
1982	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	6
1983	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
1984	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
1985	4	1	0	0	3	0	0	4
1986	0	1	0	0	0	1/0	0	0
1987	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
1988	0	0	0	0	3	1/0	0	0
1989	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
1990	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
1991	1	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
1992	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1993	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0
1994	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1995	0	0	0	0	2	82/72	0	3
1996	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	10
1997	0	2	0	0	2	1/0	0	1
1998	0	7	0	2	0	0	0	0
1999	0	2	0	0	1	13/8	1	0
2000	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
2001	2	0	0	0	1	10/5	0	0
2002	0	1	0	0	1	3/5	0	0
2003	0	0	0	0	1	0/4	0	0
2004	1	1	0	1	0	0/0	0	0
2005	1	1	0	0	0	0/0	0	0
2006	0	1	0	0	1	3/1	0	0
2007	0	0	0	0	1	0/0	0	0
2008	0	0	0	1	0	0/0	0	4
2009	0	0	0	0	1	0/0	0	6
2010	0	1	0	1	0	0/0	1	1
Total	27	25	0	7	23	116/95	5	38

Important Notes on Weather Related Fatalities:

Deaths listed above are “direct” deaths in which the weather hazard is the major cause of death. However, for heat waves, the heat and humidity are sometimes labeled as “secondary” or “contributing” causes of death.

These are **indirect deaths which if shown is the second number in the heat wave column.** Likewise, nearly all deaths attributed to vehicle deaths on highways in Winter Storms are “indirect” deaths, since the driver was driving too fast for the conditions, etc. In other words, the snow or ice did not kill the individual; the death was the result of a vehicle accident.

Winds = severe thunderstorm winds, non-thunderstorm high winds

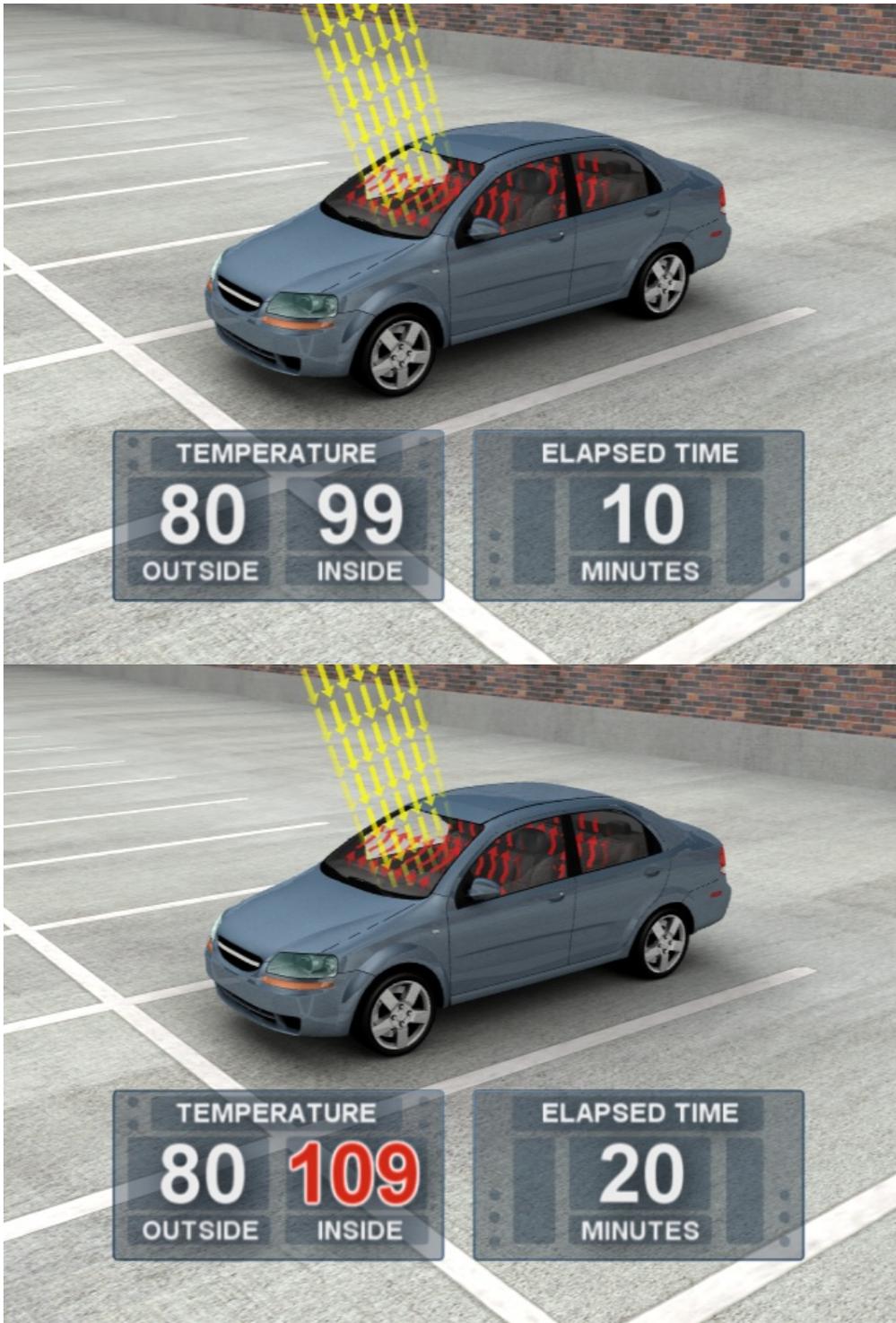
Floods = flash floods, floods, river floods, small/stream or urban flooding

Winter Storms = snowstorms, blizzards, ice storms (most deaths due to vehicle accidents are not directly related deaths, consequently, they are not counted)

Heat Wave = periods of excessive heat and humidity

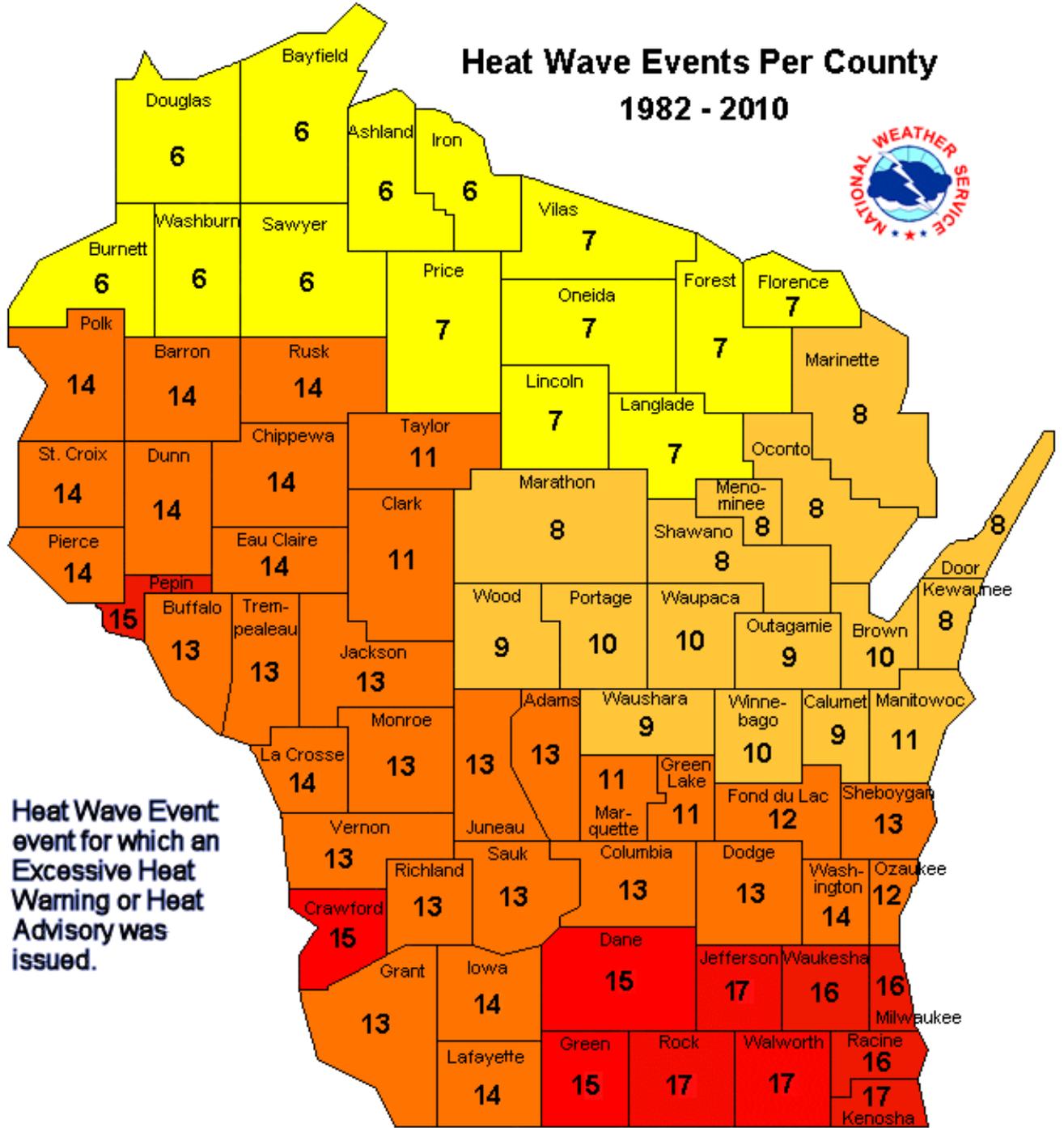
Cold Wave = periods of extreme cold

Hail = events when hail diameter was $\geq 3/4$ inch



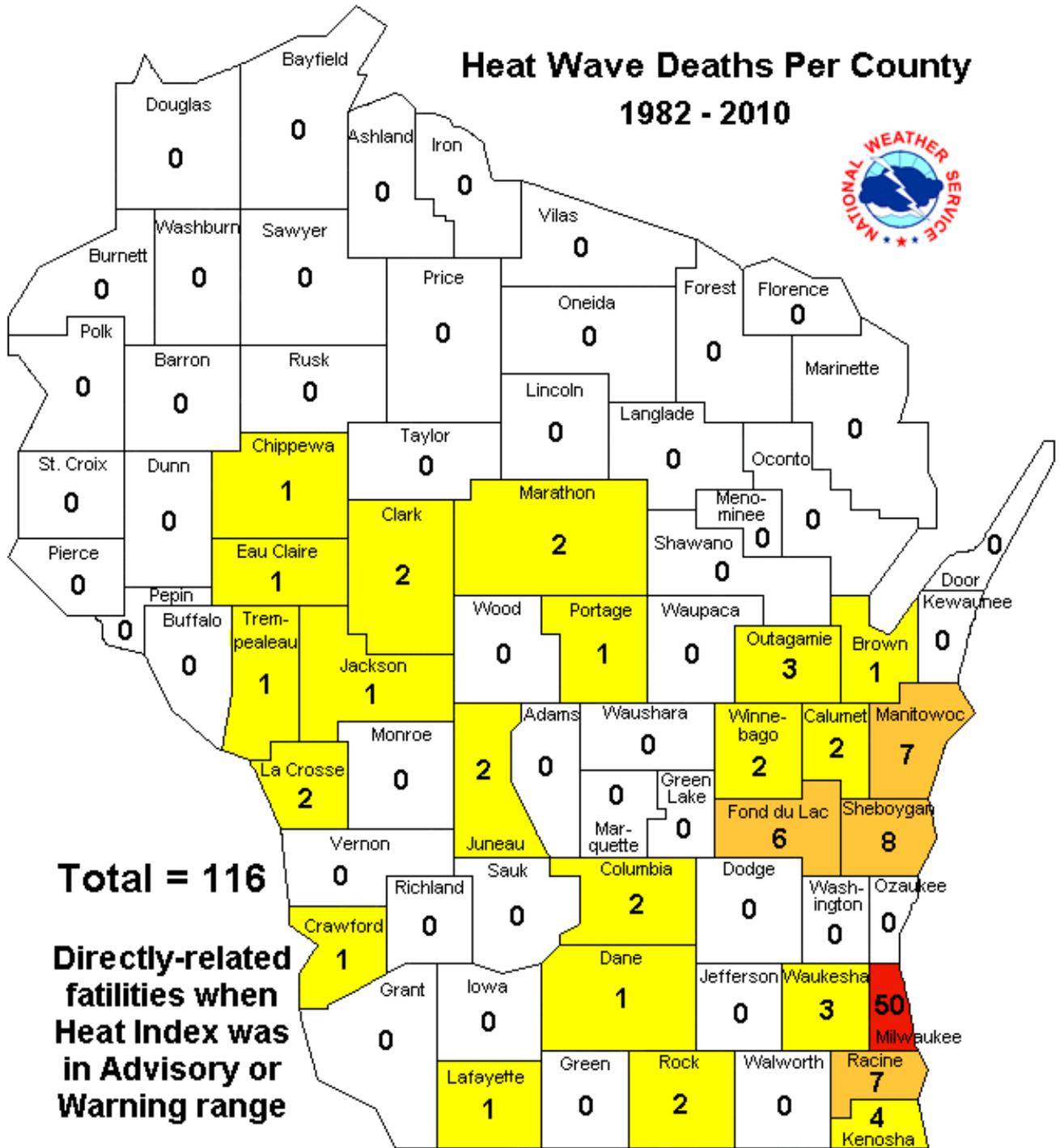
(Graphic Courtesy of General Motors and Golden Gate Weather Services)

Heat Wave Events Per County 1982 - 2010



Heat Wave Event event for which an Excessive Heat Warning or Heat Advisory was issued.

Heat Wave Deaths Per County 1982 - 2010



Total = 116

Directly-related fatalities when Heat Index was in Advisory or Warning range