

**Baltimore City
Code Red Heat Alert Plan**

(Emergency Operations Plan Annex H-05)

2008

**Version 1.8
June 6, 2008**

CONTENTS

1. Summary
2. Activation
3. Services
4. Coordination and Tracking
5. Roles and Responsibilities
6. Plan Maintenance

Attachment A	311 Heat-Related SOP
Attachment B	Energy Assistance Surveillance and Response Plan
Attachment C	Bottled Water Distribution Plan for Homeless
Attachment D	Public Health Statement – Tips for Hot Weather
Attachment E	List of Recreation Centers and Hours
Attachment F	Heat Impact and Response Report Template

1. SUMMARY

Baltimore City's Code Red Heat Alert activation establishes a coordinated approach to providing cooling relief to vulnerable populations in Baltimore City during a heat crisis in the summer months.

2. ACTIVATION

The Health Commissioner will issue a Code Red Heat Alert based on the following criteria:

- A heat advisory issued by the National Weather Service
- A heat advisory or excessive heat warning issued by the Baltimore Heat Health Watch Warning System, a protocol developed by the University of Delaware.

If possible, the decision to declare a Code Red Heat Alert will be made prior to 6 a.m. on the day in which extreme heat is forecasted. The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) will send out a press release announcing Code Red Heat Alert status. BCHD will also notify members of the Code Red Heat Alert Coordination Group (see section 5 for a complete list of participating City agencies).

3. SERVICES

A. Shelter

- The Department of Housing and Community Development will open the following cooling centers on Code Red Heat Alert days from 9:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. on weekdays, and from 11:00 AM – 7:00 PM on weekends, to provide cooling relief to vulnerable populations:
 - Northern Community Action Center -- 5225 York Road
 - Southern Community Action Center -- 606 Cherry Hill Road (inside the shopping center 2nd floor)
 - Northwest Community Action Center -- 3314 Ayrdale Avenue
 - Western Community Action Center -- 1133 Pennsylvania Avenue
 - Southeastern Community Action Center -- 3411 Bank Street
- The Commission on Aging and Retirement Education will open the following senior centers on Code Red Heat Alert days during the hours of 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. on weekdays only:
 - Waxter Center -- 1000 Cathedral Street
 - Oliver Center -- 1700 Gay Street
 - Sandtown-Winchester Center -- 1601 Baker Street
 - Hatton Center -- 2825 Fait Avenue

- The Department of Recreation and Parks will open 46 recreation centers on Code Red Heat Alert days during their normal hours of operation.
- All centers are air-conditioned and will supply cold water for citizens in need. Fans will be provided at DHCD centers until supplies run out. Additional cooling centers will be opened in the event that more sites are needed. Information regarding the number and location of cooling centers will be made available through local media, and will also be given to 311 operators.
- If private or non-profit organizations volunteer to open their facilities as cooling centers, the site operators are responsible for all supplies. These additional shelters may be announced as part of the Code Red Heat Alert program.
- Transportation to and from cooling centers will be available for seniors through the CARE Taxi Card program.
- In the event that power outages impact large concentrations of vulnerable citizens, MTA buses will be deployed to provide temporary cooling relief or provide transportation to a cooling center.

B. Outreach and Awareness

- **Mass communication**
 - A press conference will be held at the onset of hot weather. City agencies will provide information on activities and programs via the media.
 - CARE will issue email alerts on Code Red Heat Alert days to senior serving organizations throughout the city instructing them to advise older adults to keep cool and safe, advise seniors of the harmful effects of the extreme heat, and encourage seniors to seek shelter in cooling centers.
 - MOIT will conduct automated call-outs to seniors using the Reverse 911 system and lists provided by CARE.
 - CARE will conduct live outbound calls to seniors.
 - The public will be encouraged to call 311 to report cases of particularly vulnerable neighbors.
 - BCHD will inform the public about ways to stay safe and healthy during periods of extreme heat via the media and 311 line.
 - 311 operators will provide cooling center locations, safety tips and information about warning signs for heat-related morbidity. They will also attempt to link residents in need of transportation to cooling centers with available transportation programs, including CARE's Taxi Card voucher program.
 - Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods will disseminate heat-related information via email lists to community improvement associations and other community-based organizations.

➤ **Neighborhood outreach**

- DHCD On-call staff will increase their already extensive outreach efforts.
- The Police Department will do random checks of seniors in their data file throughout the summer. On Code Red Heat Alert days, patrol officers will give special attention to cooling centers.
- During late spring through summer, the Fire Department will distribute heat safety and energy assistance information as a part of its normal day-to-day operations/home visits.
- During an extreme or prolonged heat emergency, the Fire Department will work with the Department of Housing to distribute heat safety tips and information about energy assistance, and fans to targeted populations.
- OEM will activate Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) to distribute literature and knock on doors during Code Red Heat Alert days.

➤ **Citizen services**

- Baltimore Homeless Services will coordinate provision of bottled water to people who are homeless at designated locations on Code Red Heat Alert days.
- In the event of a widespread and/or prolonged water outage, DHCD and Department of Public Works, Bureau of Water and Wastewater, will provide bottled water to affected citizens.

C. Energy Assistance Surveillance and Response

The Health Department will partner with Emergency Departments and physicians to identify city residents at medical risk who can benefit from energy assistance. Identified individuals will be referred to DHCD and CARE to quickly link residents with energy assistance and social supports. See Attachment B for additional details.

4. COORDINATION AND TRACKING

A. Service Request and Delivery Process

Calls from the public to report heat-related problems or request heat-related services may be initially received at one of the following numbers:

- 311
- 410-396-3100
- 410-396-CARE

The City's policy and public statements will be consistent in encouraging citizens to call 311 and only 311 for all non-emergency heat-related inquiries and complaints. The sole exception is power outages which should be referred to BGE.

➤ **311**

311 will field calls 24 hours, 7 days per week. For heat-related inquiries and service requests, it will generate and immediately close an “ECC-Code Red” Service Request (SR). This will create a record of citizen requests for tracking purposes. In addition, 311 call-takers will provide information specific to the caller’s request, as follows:

- Cooling Center Locations – Create SR and provide information
- Cooling Center Hours – Create SR and provide information
- Inquiry to Code Red Heat Alert Declaration - Create SR and provide information
- Request for Fan – Create SR and provide # for closest CAC
- Request for Water – Create SR and provide # for closest CAC
- Transportation to Cooling Center – Create SR and provide CARE #
- Request for air conditioner – No SR Created
- Request to Check on Vulnerable Neighbor – Transfer to police non-emergency unit.

➤ **396-3100**

The City Hall Operator (396-3100) will field calls 24hours, 7 days per week. All requests related to Code Red Heat Alert will be referred to the 311 call center.

➤ **396-CARE**

CARE will field calls from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 pm Monday-Friday. First Call for Help (a private non-profit) will answer this line after hours and on weekends.

B. Monitoring and Evaluation

- BCHD will obtain information from the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) on hyperthermia-related deaths.
- BCFD will track hyperthermia-related EMS runs.
- To track heat wave severity and outreach efforts, OEM will compile a Heat Impact and Response Report each morning following a Code Red Heat Alert day. This report will track weather, hyperthermia-related medical incidents, outreach efforts, power outages and heat-related complaints to the City 311 phone line.
- All participating agencies will submit data to OEM by 9:30 AM the day after a Code Red Heat Alert day.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. American Red Cross
 - 1. Provide bottled water for distribution to homeless individuals at designated locations.

- B. Baltimore City Fire Department
 - 1. Track hyperthermia-related EMS calls.
 - 2. Distribute Code Red Heat Alert and energy assistance literature during home visits.

- C. Baltimore City Health Department (Lead Agency)
 - 1. Declare Code Red Heat Alert days, notify participating agencies, and issue press releases.
 - 2. Serve as the public spokesperson for the Code Red Heat Alert program.
 - 3. Manage Energy Assistance Surveillance and Response program.
 - 4. Obtain data from OCME on hyperthermia-related deaths.
 - 5. Field requests from private organizations to designate their facilities as cooling centers.

- D. Baltimore Homeless Services
 - 1. Coordinate provision of bottled water on Code Red Heat Alert days to people who are homeless.

- E. Baltimore Police Department
 - 1. Manage senior citizen bracelet program.
 - 2. Dispatch officers to check on vulnerable citizens based on calls to 311.

- F. Commission on Aging and Retirement Education (Core Agency)
 - 1. Operate cooling centers at senior centers from 9:00 AM – 7:00 PM on Code Red Heat Alert days, NOT including weekends.
 - 2. Distribute water at cooling centers.
 - 3. Field requests from citizens at 396-CARE.
 - 4. Conduct live outbound calling to the most vulnerable seniors.
 - 5. Provide MOIT data to conduct automated outbound calling to seniors.
 - 6. Provide transportation to seniors via the Taxicard program.

- G. Department of Housing and Community Development (Core Agency)
 - 1. Operate cooling centers at community action centers from 9:00 AM – 7:00 PM on Code Red Heat Alert weekdays, and 11:00 AM – 7:00 PM on weekends.
 - 2. Distribute water and fans at cooling centers.
 - 3. Administer home energy assistance programs.
 - 4. During power outages, activate its community network to identify mass needs for water and other essential goods.

- H. Department of Public Works, Bureau of Water and Wastewater
 - 1. Provide bottled water for areas affected by widespread and/or prolonged water outages.
- I. Department of Recreation and Parks
 - 1. Operate recreation centers and offer free bottled or cooler water during normal business hours on Code Red Heat Alert days.
- J. Mayor's Office of Information Technology
 - 1. Conduct automated call-outs using Reverse 911 and data provided by CARE.
 - 2. Field calls at the 311 Call Center concerning Code Red Heat Alert. Provide information to the public and generate service requests for applicable calls.
- K. Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods
 - 1. Distribute Code Red Heat Alert press releases and other information to community organizations via email and other mechanisms.
- L. Municipal Telephone Exchange
 - 1. Refer callers to 311 for information on Code Red Heat Alerts or request services.
- M. Office of Emergency Management (Core Agency)
 - 1. Convene and organize the Code Red Heat Alert Coordination Group.
 - 2. Compile and distribute Heat Impact and Response reports each morning following a Code Red Heat Alert day.
 - 3. Maintain and monitor heat-related data to identify trends that may indicate an impending crisis, and activate additional resources is needed.
 - 4. Activate CERT teams to conduct outreach and check on vulnerable residents.
- N. Salvation Army
 - 1. Provide bottled water for distribution to homeless individuals at designated locations.

6. PLAN MAINTENANCE

- A. OEM shall maintain this plan and organize an annual review by the Code Red Heat Alert Coordination Group no later than May 10 of each year.
- B. Based on the findings of annual reviews, OEM shall coordinate plan revisions as necessary.
- C. Agencies' internal procedures to execute their responsibilities under this plan shall be reviewed annually by the respective agencies no later than May 20 of each year.
- D. Participating agencies are responsible for notifying OEM if policies or procedures that substantively affect this plan are modified.