



NOAA - National Weather Service

Tampa Bay Area

2525 14th Avenue SE, Ruskin, Florida 33570

813-645-2323

<http://weather.gov/tampa>

Today Is Temperature Extremes and Wildfires Day

In cooperation with the National Weather Service, state and local emergency management agencies and the American Red Cross, this week has been proclaimed as Florida Severe Weather Awareness Week. This week is designed to teach Floridians about the dangers of the different types of hazardous weather found in Florida.

The following hazardous weather topics will be discussed...

Monday	Lightning Hazards
Tuesday	Marine Hazards
Wednesday	Tornadoes and Thunderstorms
Thursday	Hurricanes and Flooding
Friday	Temperature Extremes and Wildfires

Temperature Extremes

West central and southwest Florida is well known for hot and humid summers. However, despite relatively small temperature differences between summer and winter, extremes of warm and cold occur just about every year.

Summer heat

Between June and September, the combination of heat and humidity across west central and southwest Florida often makes it feel like 100 degrees or more. These heat index values can take a toll on the human body, especially if unprepared. When the heat index reaches or exceeds 105, the threat for more serious hazards increases. These include heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. Heat illness can be fatal.

The following are some heat safety rules:

- Never leave a child or pet in unattended vehicles, even for a moment.
- Drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids, preferably water.
- Dress in loose, lightweight, and light fitting clothing and use sunscreen to avoid getting sunburns.
- Stay out of the sun, especially around midday, and remain near air conditioned locations.
- Restrict strenuous activities to a cooler time of day.

Winter Freeze

Freezing weather occurs often in Florida and it can be a killer. Since 2001, 6 people have died from cold-related conditions across the state. Temperatures don't need to reach freezing to cause potential hazards. Temperatures in the mid to upper 30s with a moderate wind causes wind chill values that make the temperature feel like freezing.

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The following are some cold safety rules:

- Stay indoors and use safe heating sources.
- Keep space heaters away from all flammable materials, such as curtains and furniture, and install smoke detectors.
- Indoors, do not use charcoal or other fuel-burning devices, such as grills, that produce carbon monoxide, and install at least one carbon monoxide detector.
- Outdoors, stay dry and in wind protected areas.
- Wear multiple layers of loose-fitting clothes and a hat and gloves.
- Drink plenty of fluids and eat high-calorie foods.

For additional information about temperature extremes, please visit the following website:

<http://www.floridadisaster.org/kids/index2.htm>

Wildfires

A wildfire is an undesirable fire occurring in the natural environment. The three components necessary to start a fire are oxygen, fuel, and heat. In Florida during 2011, more than 4700 fires devastated over 220 thousand acres. Wildfires can also result in the loss of life and property.

Each year, thousands of acres of wildland and many homes are destroyed by fires that can erupt at any time of the year from a variety of causes, including arson, lightning, and debris burning. Adding to the fire hazard is the growing number of people living in new communities built in areas that were once wildland. This growth places even greater pressure on Florida's wildland firefighters. As a result of this growth, fire protection becomes everyone's responsibility.

Residents can help to protect life and property by taking action and through educational programs such as Firewise that can reduce the threat of wildfires through fire resistant construction and landscaping techniques. A Firewise home has defensible space, lean, clean, and green landscaping, fire resistant roof construction and fire resistant exterior construction and attachments. They also have emergency access and a disaster plan in place including evacuation plans. Remember to always follow local burning regulations and laws.

To learn more about Firewise and other fire related information, please visit the following websites:

<http://www.firewise.org>

<http://www.fl-dof.com>

<http://www.floridadisaster.org/kids/index2.htm>