

Washington State Department of Corrections

WADOC Heat Mitigation Efforts in Prisons

In preparation for the coming warmer months the Washington State Department of Corrections is now implementing its heat mitigation efforts for prison facilities across the state. Throughout the warmer months, we will update this information as needed to provide the most accurate and up to date information.

The following are general efforts facilities may take during warmer months if necessary to mitigate any excessive impacts in our facilities; mitigation efforts do vary by facility due to each facility's unique layout, makeup, and needs. Facilities will communicate with incarcerated and staff when the need arises to implement the following efforts. However, the consistent approach at each facility is to ensure the safety and well-being of the incarcerated and our staff.

The general efforts facilities may take during periods of excess heat include, but are not limited to:

- Providing ice water. Ice machines have been inspected for the season and are working. Plans are in place to address if problems arise.
- When ice machines are in use to mitigate excessive heat, ice will be made at night while people sleep to keep up with the demand during the day.
- Cooling station areas have been identified should the need arise, misting stations will be available in the yards.
- Shorts and t-shirts may be allowed outside of units; Incarcerated persons may be allowed to wear shower shoes with no socks.
- Incarcerated individuals will be allowed to wear wet towels to mitigate the excessive heat.
- Sunscreen has been purchased by DOC and will be made available to individuals wanting to access the yard.
- Extra movement may be established for recreation for population to leave yard early.
- Medical staff are looking at locations where patients can be housed if temperatures cannot be controlled in the infirmary.
- Facilities should also consider alternative options for heat mitigation in visit areas. These options may include (but are not limited to) additional access to water, ice where available, additional fans, etc.