

- There is scientific consensus that our climate is changing. The health effects are expected to be both direct (injury or illness due to extreme weather) and indirect (reduced air quality and increased vector-borne illness).
- Some residents and individuals will be disproportionately impacted.

Hot Weather and Health

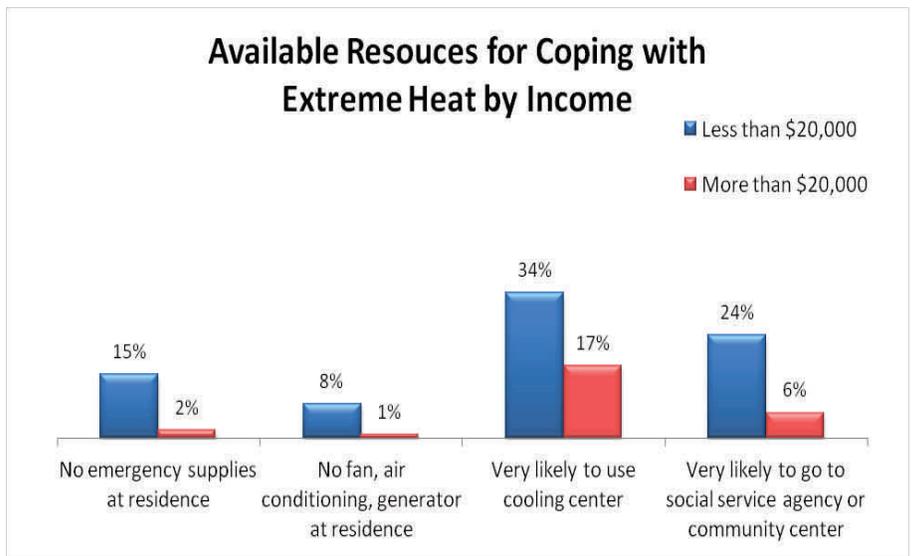
Over 1,300 area residents participated in the survey

Climate change is often viewed solely as an environmental issue, and disasters or health emergencies are viewed by many as affecting everyone equitably. Research demonstrates subsets of the population are much more likely to suffer harm or illness and far less likely to recover. Children, older adults and persons with chronic health conditions, disabilities, lower incomes or who speak languages other than English may be less likely to receive alert messages or to have the capacity or willingness to respond when emergencies occur.

The Hot Weather and Health survey allowed Washtenaw County Public Health (WCPH) to seek broad community input, provide targeted outreach and pilot elements of a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) process. From May through August of 2011, the Hot Weather and Health Survey was offered online and in paper form at a variety of community locations. Results provide critical information about risk perception, emergency readiness, potential response actions and understanding of alert systems. A total of 1322 individuals completed the entire survey.

Recommendations from the survey include:

- Develop clear and coordinated local alert and resource information
- Use local data to plan adaptation strategies
- Emphasize targeted preparedness and service delivery with vulnerable residents



Public Health Response

WCPH’s emergency preparedness division will continue to work closely with local first responders and community organizations to:

- Revise and coordinate emergency response plans
- Prioritize access for potentially vulnerable residents
- Use local health data to inform decision making around public health threats and climate change

For more information:

Susan R. Cerniglia, MPH
 ringlers@ewashtenaw.org
 734-544-6759

<http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org>

