

Office of Surveillance & Public Health Preparedness
Program of Public Health Informatics

Heat Surveillance Monthly Report
2016 Season
August Report

Highlights

- Houston Health Department conducts heat injury surveillance from March to September. This time period includes Spring and Summer seasons.

Heat Related Illness

- An Emergency Center (EC) visit is counted as a Heat Related Illness (HRI) when chief complaints include variations of heat exhaustion, heat stroke, heat cramps, overheating, etc.
- This season 253 EC visits were related to HRI from March 2016 to August 2016.
- EC visits due to HRI have increased from March to June and remained above 50 per month in July and August.
- The highest counts in any given day of HRI occurred on June 17 (n=12).
- Seventy-one percent (71%) of EC visits for HRI occur among males. The age-group that accounts for the most (72%) ED visits due to HRI is 18 to 64 year olds.
- EC visits due to HRI have occurred in ZIP codes across the Greater Houston Metropolitan Area. The ZIP codes with counts higher than five are 77015, 77520, 77379, 77357, 77036, 77084, and 77506.

Mortality

- From March to August, there were three heat-related deaths in the Houston area in 2016.

Historical Review

- From 2013 to 2016, heat related deaths are more likely to occur when the average maximum temperatures are above 90 degrees Fahrenheit.
- From 2013 to 2015, the average number of mortalities during the Spring and Summer seasons was 4 (range 2 to 6).

Announcements

- City of Houston activates the Heat Emergency Plan after two consecutive days when the heat index reaches 108 or above. If your home is not air conditioned, seek accommodations in air-conditioned facilities such as [libraries](#), [multi-service centers](#), malls, movies theatres, etc. Cooling center information is [here](#).

- [@HoustonHealth](#) and [@HoustonOEM](#) post updated information on 

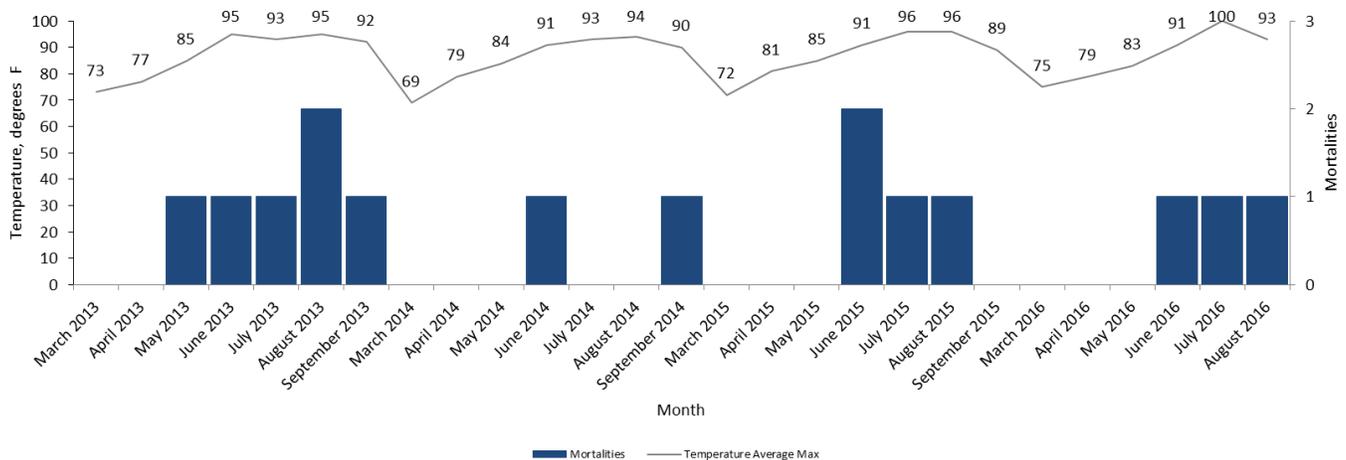
Table 1. Occurrence of Heat-Related Events in Houston, 2013 to 2016

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016
Heat related illness ^(a)	144	151	221	253
Heat related mortalities ^(b)	6	2	4	3
Total	150	153	225	256

(a) Heat related illness for 2016 are from 03/15/2016 to 08/31/2016

(b) Heat related deaths for 2016 are from 03/15/2016 to 08/31/2016

Figure 1. Heat related deaths ^c by month, 2013 to 2016



^c A heat related death is defined as a death whose primary cause is related to excessive heat.

Figure 2. Heat Related Illness (HRI) Emergency Center visits per month, 2016

Heat Related Illness (HRI) visits per month, 2016

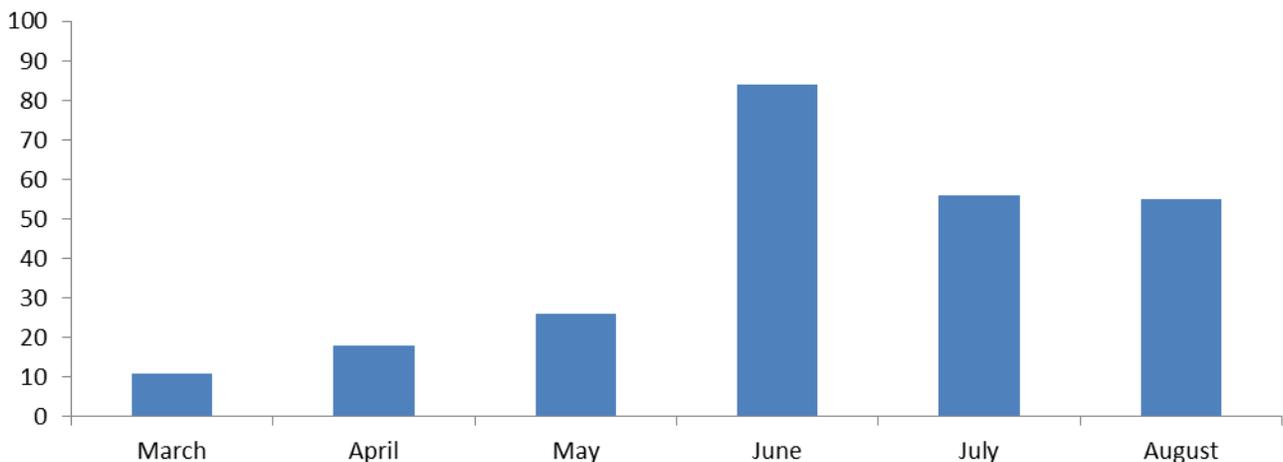


Figure 4. Map of Heat-related illness in Greater Houston Metro Area, March 2016 to August 2016

ZIP code	HRI Count
77015	12
77520	10
77379	8
77357	7
77036	6
77084	6
77506	6
77029	5
77058	5
77082	5
77082	5
77365	5
77478	5
77489	5

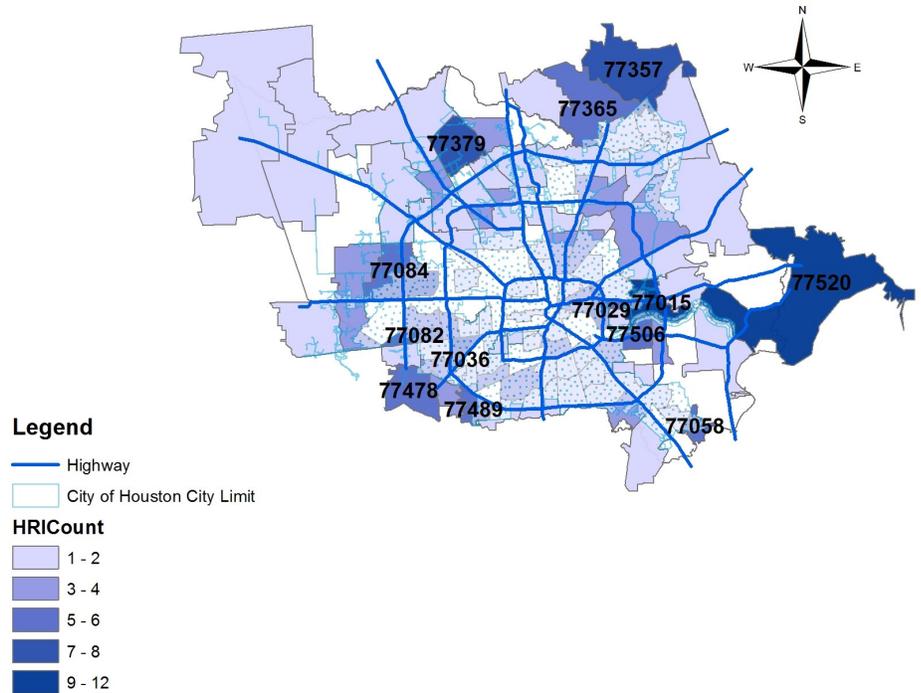


Figure 5. Age distribution of Heat Related Illness

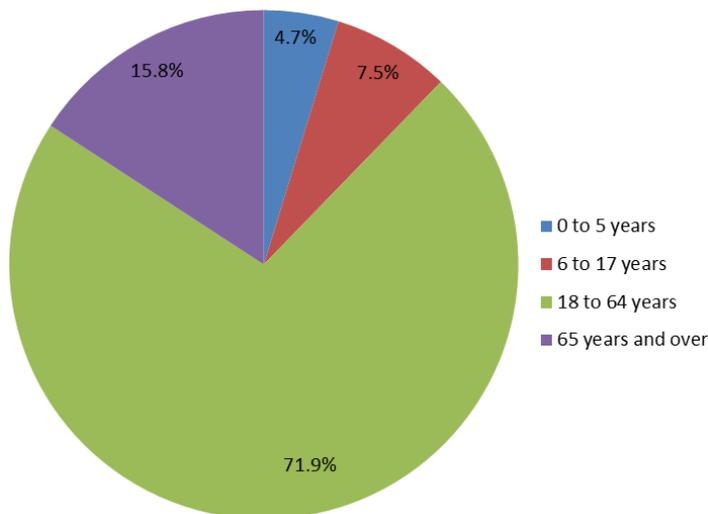
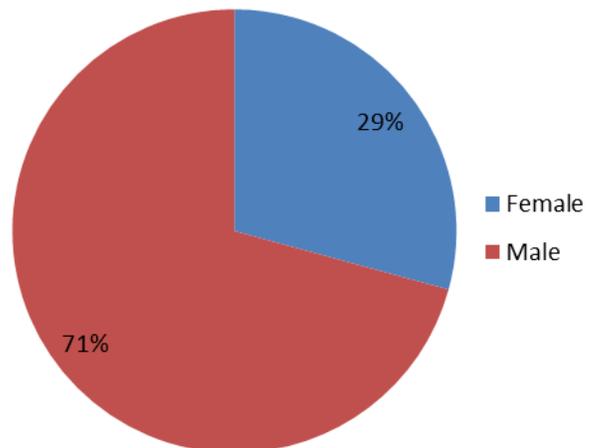


Figure 6. Gender distribution of Heat Related Illness



Tips for Prevention of Heat-related Illness

The Houston Health Department (HHD) recommends Houstonians begin taking precautions against high temperatures to avoid heat-related illnesses. High body temperatures can lead to damage to the brain or other vital organs and even death.

What Can You Do?

Stay cool.

- Find an air-conditioned shelter
- Avoid direct sunlight
- Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing
- Take cool showers or baths
- Do not rely on a fan as your primary cooling device

Stay hydrated.

- Drink more water than usual
- Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink more fluids
- Avoid alcohol or liquids containing high amounts of sugar
- Remind others to drink enough water

Stay informed.

- Check local news for extreme heat alerts and safety tips
- Learn the symptoms of heat illness

For more information regarding prevention tips for heat-related events, please visit [HHD website](#) or [CDC website](#)



The Houston Heat Surveillance Report is available on the Houston Health Department web site [here](#).

NOTE: Data for Heat Related Illness is obtained from RODS system. The system retrieves Emergency Center chief complaint data from over 35 emergency centers in the Greater Houston Metropolitan Area.

NOTE: Data for Heat Mortalities is obtained from the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences



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