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### How are Havre de Grace residents beating the heat this week?



Eron Cisneros with Interscope Contractors, takes a water break while doing concrete work for the new curb and sidewalk along Washington Street in Havre de Grace on Tuesday morning. (Brian Krista/Staff)



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PUBLISHED: June 24, 2025 at 2:52 PM EDT

As the National Weather Service issued an extreme heat warning for most parts of Maryland this week, with estimated heat index levels of up to 110 degrees on Monday and Tuesday, Harford County residents struggled to stay cool.

County officials opened 11 “cooling centers” at branches of the Harford County Library and the county’s Department of Emergency Services advised residents to drink plenty of fluids, stay indoors as much as possible and never leave pets or children in closed vehicles.

Havre de Grace resident Theresa Mulqueen, 56, took this advice seriously. Mulqueen, who walks as a form of exercise, adjusted her walking time from the evening to early morning to prevent a heat-related injury. She attempted to walk Monday afternoon, but said it was a huge mistake.

"I felt nauseous like I was going to pass out," she said.

Mulqueen's granddaughter participates in a summer camp and is outside all day, so to help keep her cool she bought her a battery-powered spritzer and supplied her with plenty of water to stay hydrated. She said her son, who's a landscaper, was advised to hydrate often while working and given frequent breaks.

"We're doing the best we can," she said.

The Harford County Department of Emergency Services instructs anyone working outside in the heat to drink water every 20 minutes, even if you're not thirsty; take regular breaks to rest in a shaded area; and look for any signs of heat illness such as muscle spasms, nausea, dizziness or fainting.

Kelly Divito, also a Havre de Grace resident, said staying in air-conditioned places, applying sunscreen and staying hydrated are the keys to keeping cool during the heat wave. She said the cooling centers are critical for the whole community, not just for populations that are at risk for heat injuries.

Divito added she's used this time to check in with her neighbors who may need help and appreciates the social media interaction from community members on which heating and cooling companies can quickly address problems that may arise.

"You don't want anybody to get a heat injury or be struggling and you don't know because heat injuries happen so fast," she said.

Divito cautions everyone that's going outside during peak hours to wear protective gear, be intentional on how long you'll be out, pack plenty of liquids and know where to get more if you run out.

"It can be a critical life-or-death [situation]," she said.

On Wednesday, Harford County and other parts of Maryland will be under an extreme heat watch from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. with a heat index of up to 111 degrees.