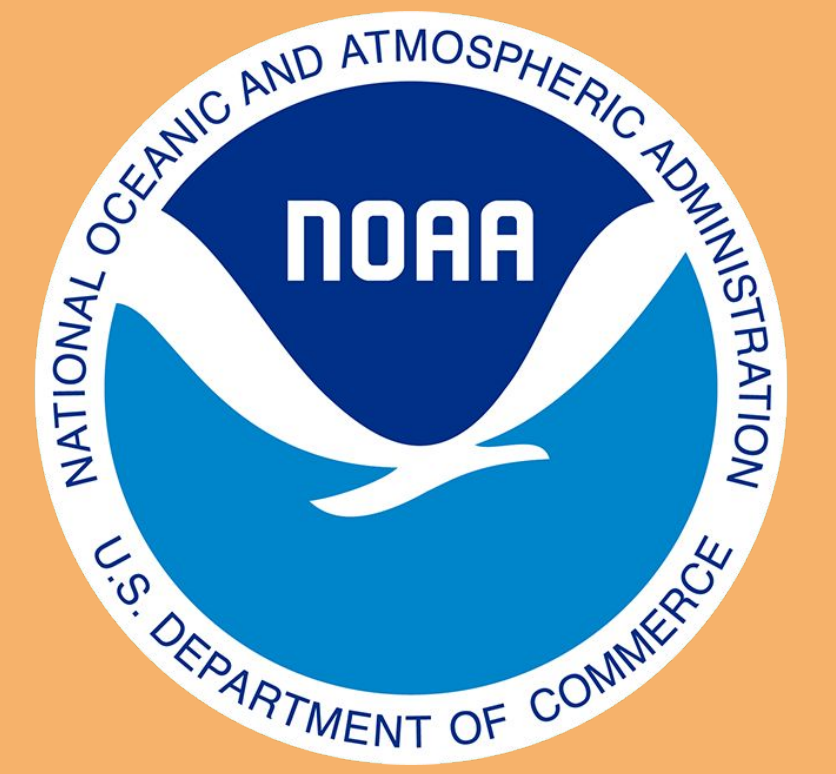




A Coordinated Federal Initiative to Communicate About Extreme Heat



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Introduction

Extreme heat affects a variety of geographic areas and has a wide scope of impacts, ranging from increased morbidity to productivity losses and critical infrastructure damage. This range of impacts presents a challenge for communication because it requires understanding and collaboration across disciplines.

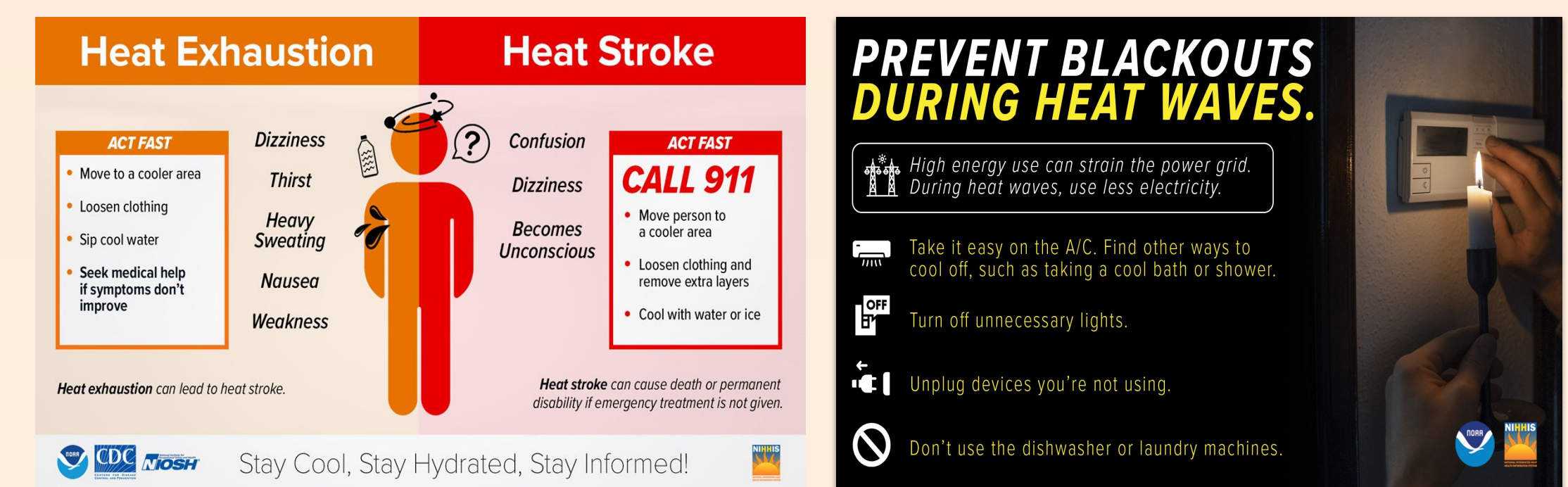
Coordinated communication efforts are essential to ensuring a heat-resilient future. The National Integrated Heat Health Information System (NIHHIS) and White House Interagency Working Group on Extreme Heat (IWG) collaborated across 25 federal departments and agencies to develop the first comprehensive Federal Heat Communications Plan.

Key Challenges in Heat Messaging

- Heat is not “visible” like other natural hazards.
- Heat season is becoming more unpredictable in terms of timing, intensity, and location.
- It’s often difficult for people to draw a connection between heat exposure and risk.
- Heat, heat risk, and resources for resilience are not evenly distributed, so communication materials must be carefully tailored.
- Current communication efforts do not always provide clear, actionable steps people can take.
- Measures of success, including morbidity and mortality statistics or behavioral change, are inconsistent and difficult to measure.

Components of the Plan

Co-Branded Infographics: Cross-agency collaboration to create downloadable infographics available to both government agencies and external partners



Social Media Campaigns: Continued efforts among agencies and partners to disseminate heat safety information on social media, including through a new late-season campaign

Enhancements to HEAT.GOV: New information added to a central portal for federal heat resources, information, and funding opportunities



Webinars and Workshops: Coordination on in-person heat tabletop exercises, regional webinars, tool demonstrations, and the NIHHIS Overlooked and Overburdened series

Expanded Communication Channels: Digital and print materials, translation into multiple languages, and photo contests for visual communication

Heat Messaging Workshop Series

**Part 1
Federal Agencies
November 2, 2023**



**Part 2:
Non-Federal Partners
November 8, 2023**



**Part 3:
NIHHIS-IWG Team
January 10-11, 2024**

- Outlining agency roles and audiences in heat communication
- Discussing strategies, challenges, and successes in federal heat messaging

- 50+ representatives of academic, nonprofit, for-profit, and local government institutions
- Gathering feedback on current communication practices

- Reviewing 2024 messaging plans among agencies
- Drafting the 2024 Federal Heat Communications Plan

Objectives

- Improve whole-of-government coordination to prepare for and raise awareness of the dangers of heat across timescales
- Outline planned federal heat communication activities for 2024 and identify how agencies can support and leverage each other’s efforts
- Strengthen relationships with non-federal partners to amplify heat messaging and reach wider networks
- Prepare for short-term communication campaigns and identify ongoing challenges to address long-term

Overarching Approaches

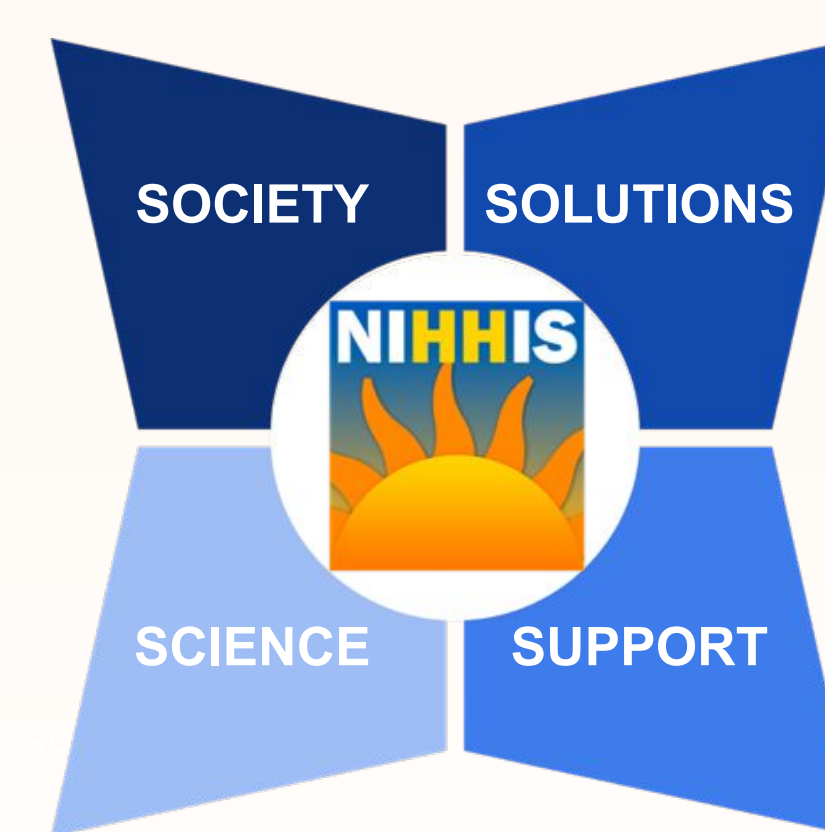
Best Practices: Follow principles of effective communication, including attention to plain language, accessibility, and equity-focused messaging

Tailored Information: Provide actionable information specific to each audience, including groups at higher risk of heat-related illness and death

Functional Coordination: Manage ongoing and event-driven interagency coordination on heat

Engaging Partnerships: Leverage both federal and non-federal efforts and continue to engage with individuals and organizations who provided feedback during listening sessions

Plan Alignment: Correspond with the strategies, goals, and priorities identified in the National Heat Strategic Plan



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