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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DEMA Provides Tips to Avoid Heat-Related Illnesses

DeKalb asks citizens to use caution, check on elderly neighbors

DECATUR, Ga. – As the county experiences a rise in temperatures during the summer, DeKalb County Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) offers advice to stay cool throughout the season.

According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, between 1999 and 2009, an average of 658 people died each year due to heat in the United States. Older adults, the very young and people with mental illnesses or chronic diseases are at highest risk.

Below are some tips to stay safe in the heat this summer:

- Stay in an air-conditioned area during the hottest hours of the day. Residents without air conditioning should go to a public place such as a shopping mall or a DeKalb County library to stay cool.
- Wear light, loose-fitting clothing.
- Drink water often; at least four cups every hour if outside. Don't wait until experiencing thirst.
- If you must work outdoors, take frequent breaks; at least five minutes for every 15 minutes of work, in the shade or indoors.
- Avoid unnecessary sun exposure. When in the sun, wear a hat, preferably with a wide brim.
- Don't forget about pets. Bring them inside during the day, or if outside, give them extra water and a shady cool place.
- Do not leave children or pets in the car. Even with the windows down or cracked, the temperature can increase to more than 110 degrees within 10 minutes.
- Check neighbors, especially those who live alone or are elderly.

Should temperatures stay elevated, DeKalb County will evaluate opening cooling centers. Information will be posted on the county website at www.dekalbcountyga.gov.

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