Urban Heat Islands
Health Impacts

What Is an Urban Heat Island?

An urban heat island occurs when a city experiences much warmer temperatures than nearby rural areas. The difference in temperature between urban and less-developed rural areas has to do with how well the surfaces in each environment absorb and hold heat.

Impacts of Urban Heat Island

Health impacts such as respiratory problems, sunstroke, dehydration, tiredness, and increased risk of heatstroke-related mortality.

Increased energy consumption leads to higher utility bills and demand may overload the electrical grid.

More air pollution and elevated greenhouse gas emissions are trapped in the urban area because of buildings, roads, sidewalks, and parking lots.

Reduce the Urban Heat Island

- Increase the number of areas with shade around your home or business.
- Plant trees and other vegetation.
- Use energy-efficient appliances.
- Install light-colored roofing shingles.

Scan for more information and resources about the Urban Heat Islands

Most Impacted Populations

- **Young children** are more susceptible to extreme heat.
- **Older adults** may have limited mobility and access to resources.
- **People with underlying medical conditions** like asthma, high blood pressure and heart disease are at higher risk to heat.
- **Low-income residents** may have inadequate housing and a lack of air conditioning.
- **Outdoor workers** have higher heat exposure.
- **Persons with disabilities.**

Beat the Heat

STAY COOL
Take cool showers or use a spray bottle to mist yourself with cool water. Wear light colored and loose-fitting clothing.

STAY HYDRATED
Drink plenty of water. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. Avoid alcohol or liquids containing large amounts of sugar or caffeine.

STAY INFORMED
Check local weather forecasts so you can plan indoor activities when it's hot outside.

STAY CONNECTED
Check on at-risk friends, family, and neighbors at least twice a day.

Scan for Places to Stay Cool

CITY OF SAN ANTONIO — TEXAS —
METROPOLITAN HEALTH DISTRICT