



Extreme Heat Facility Preparedness Guidance

Administrators

This document is designed to assist health centers develop annual or long-term policies and procedures for ensuring the facility is resilient and prepared for an extreme heat event.

For clinics that lease the facility, it is important to have a thorough understanding of what the landlord or management company's responsibilities are regarding maintenance, repairs, and replacement, and which are the responsibilities of the clinic.

Facility Preparedness

- Develop schedules to inspect HVAC systems, electric fans, ceiling fans, dehumidifiers, window blinds, and windows to ensure they operate appropriately.
 - HVAC systems should be inspected twice a year (each spring and autumn) by a certified professional. For clinics that operate in shared use buildings, check with the building facilities management to ensure the clinic is being thoroughly inspected.
 - Standing or box fans should receive basic cleaning at least once a week to prevent dust accumulation. More thorough cleaning should be done at the start and end of each warm weather season. Lubricating moving parts should also be done at this time. If there are structural or mechanical issues, replace or repair the fan as appropriate. Maintenance and care should be done in line with manufacturer instructions.
 - Ceiling fans should be cleaned at least once a week to prevent the accumulation of dust. Screws and connections should be checked every 3-4 months, or if the ceiling fan starts making noise or starts wobbling. Parts should be lubricated annually after a thorough clean. Ideally at the end of the warm weather season. Maintenance and care should be done in line with manufacturer instructions.
 - Dehumidifiers should be maintained according to manufacturer instructions. They will need to be emptied and cleaned at regular intervals depending on the capacity of your clinic's specific machine(s). For clinics that operate in shared use buildings with industrial humidifiers, check with the building facilities management to ensure regular dehumidifier maintenance is occurring.
 - Window blinds should be kept clean and free of dust with weekly basic cleaning. Blinds should be checked for cracks and tears, and cords should be checked quarterly to look for weakening or fraying. Replace or repair as appropriate.
 - Windows should be checked annually for insulation. Windows that properly insulate will keep the facility cool in the warm months, and warm in the cool months. Windows can be insulated using weather stripping for mobile parts and caulking for stationary parts.
- Identify staff responsible for following schedule to inspect the operability of all equipment essential to maintaining a cool facility. This includes, but may not be limited to, the equipment listed above.
- Install reflectors on windows to deflect heat from direct sunlight. This is a one-time installation, but reflectors should be maintained and checked according to manufacturer instructions. Work with the installation team to determine what timeline makes sense for the facility.

Refrigeration

- Schedule annual maintenance and inspections for refrigeration units by a certified professional.
- Schedule removal of any frost or ice inside of any freezers or refrigerators twice a year or more frequently as needed.
- Identify staff to take care of inspecting refrigerators and freezers on a scheduled basis.
- In the event of a power failure, create a plan for storage of medical supplies requiring refrigeration which may include an accessible back-up storage facility.
- Consider installing a digital remote sensor that can send an alert if temperature exceeds acceptable standard.

