



# KITSAP COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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## Safety Advisory

### **Summer car temps place children and pets at risk**

**Port Orchard, Wash.** -- "It was only for a few minutes," cried the distraught parent to an investigating sheriff's deputy, as firefighter medics administered first aid to a child suffering from heat stroke. "I just ducked into the store for a few moments. The car was locked and the windows left cracked open. I don't know how this could've happened. The car's temperature was cool when I got out."

And, yet, in extreme heat, it only takes 10 minutes for the interior of a vehicle to reach deadly temperatures on a hot day.

"The number of calls dispatched to patrol deputies about children and pets left inside of parked vehicles has increased," said Sheriff Steve Boyer. "Don't become complacent about safety. Summertime interior temperatures of parked vehicles are deadly even with the windows partially open," the sheriff added. "The risk of serious injury or death during hot weather is heightened for children and pets left alone inside of vehicles."

Research says that hyperthermia is a leading cause of non-crash deaths of children.

Each year, more than 105,000 children either die or are injured in non-crash motor vehicle incidents on private roadways, in driveways and parking lots, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. These incidents include hyperthermia, strangulation by power windows and carbon monoxide poisoning, to name a few. Some of these deaths and injuries are the result of a vehicle driver backing over a child that the driver didn't see.

#### **Sheriff's Safety Tips:**

- Never leave a child or a pet unattended inside of a vehicle -- at any time!
- Never leave children or pets in a parked vehicle, even with the windows partially open or with the engine and the air conditioning on.
- Do not let children play in or around an unattended vehicle. The vehicle is not a play area.
- If you see a child alone in a hot vehicle, call 9-1-1 immediately. If a child appears to be in distress, remove the child from the vehicle as quickly as possible and cool the child rapidly. ***Who's made that call to 9-1-1?***

## **Heat Related Illnesses:**

### **Heat stroke**

Heat stroke is a serious heat-related illness. It occurs when the body becomes unable to control its temperature. Body temperature may rise to 106° F or higher within 10 minutes. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not provided.

Symptoms of heat stroke may include:

- Confusion, agitation, hallucinations
- Dizziness
- Extremely high body temperature (above 103°F)
- Nausea
- Rapid heartbeat
- Red, hot, and dry skin (no sweating)
- Throbbing headache
- Unconsciousness

Apply cool water to the skin and place ice packs on the groin and armpits. Seek immediate emergency medical attention -- Call 9-1-1!

### **Heat exhaustion**

Heat exhaustion is mild form of heat-related illness that can develop after several days of exposure to high temperatures and an inadequate fluid intake. Those most prone to heat exhaustion are children up to four years-old, elderly people, those with high blood pressure, and those working or exercising in a hot environment.

Symptoms of heat exhaustion may include:

- Cool, moist skin
- Dizziness
- Fainting
- Fast, shallow breathing
- Fast, weak pulse rate
- Headache
- Heavy sweating
- Muscle cramps
- Nausea or vomiting
- Paleness, tiredness, weakness

Seek urgent medical attention if symptoms worsen or last longer than one hour. Untreated, heat exhaustion may progress to heat stroke. Seek emergency medical attention or call 911 immediately if symptoms are severe, or the affected person has heart problems or high blood pressure.