

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

A weekly update for residents, visitors, and workers in the District of Columbia



Friday, December 13, 2013

HYPOTHERMIA SEASON RUNS THROUGH MARCH 31

The weather forecasters say it might get cold enough for snow on Sunday night. As the temperature drops, the concern for hypothermia increases. Hypothermia is a condition in which a person's temperature drops below what is required for normal metabolism and bodily functions. The Department of Human Services' Hypothermia Watch Partner Program is designed to prevent hypothermia deaths among the homeless by providing District citizens with a hotline number they can call to have homeless persons who are outside in freezing temperatures picked up by a van and transported to a local shelter. For more information, call the shelter hotline 1 (800) 535-7252.

The hypothermia season runs through March 31. The Emergency Management Agency issues Hypothermia Alerts when the temperature is 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below, or when the wind chill factor creates the same effect. The hours of operation for the hypothermia alert are 7pm to 7am, but will be extended until the temperature or wind chill factor rises above 32 degrees. Those who do not come in from the cold when hypothermia alerts are issued put themselves in life-threatening positions. The body enters into a hypothermia state when its temperature is below 95 degrees.

Signs and Symptoms

Hypothermia usually comes on gradually. As the body temperature of a cold-exposed person decreases, impaired consciousness, confusion, or disorientation may occur. Often, people aren't aware that they need medical attention. Common signs to look for are uncontrollable shivering, which is your body's attempt to generate heat through muscle activity, and the "-umbles" — stumbles, mumbles, fumbles and grumbles. These behaviors may be a result of changes in consciousness and motor coordination caused by hypothermia. Other signs and symptoms may include:

- Slurred speech
- Abnormally slow rate of breathing
- Cold, pale skin
- Fatigue, lethargy or apathy

Seek immediate medical care for any person who has been exposed to cold air or water and who is shivering, appears disoriented, and shows a lack of coordination, has cold and pale skin, appears tired, and is slurring speech. Try to keep the person warm and dry, preferably indoors or at least out of the wind, until help arrives.

Risk factors

Being in extreme cold, wearing wet clothes — especially in the presence of wind — and being in cold water can all play a part in increasing your chances of hypothermia. People who are elderly, very young, mentally impaired, intoxicated or who have certain health issues are especially vulnerable. In addition, a variety of medications, principally sedative-hypnotics, may predispose users to hypothermia; ethanol and neuroleptic medications particularly increase susceptibility to cold.

Prevention

Avoid alcohol consumption and the use of illegal substances, because these may increase your risk of hypothermia. Before you or your children step out into cold air, remember the advice that follows with the simple acronym COLD:

- **C for cover.** Wear a hat or other protective covering to prevent body heat from escaping from your head, face and neck. Cover your hands with mittens instead of gloves. Mittens

» For more information on the signs and symptoms of hypothermia and ways to prevent hypothermia, see "Winter Plan" on the Department of Human Services Website at:
<http://dhs.dc.gov/>

» The Department of Human Services' Hypothermia Watch Partner Program is designed to prevent hypothermia deaths among the homeless. For more information, call the shelter hotline at: 1 (800) 535-7252

are more effective than gloves because mittens keep your fingers in closer contact with one another.

- **O for overexertion.** Avoid activities that would cause you to sweat a lot. The combination of wet clothing and cold weather can give you chills.
- **L for layers.** Wear loose fitting, layered, lightweight clothing. Outer clothing made of tightly woven, water-repellent material is best for wind protection. Wool, silk or polypropylene inner layers hold more body heat than cotton does.
- **D for dry.** Stay as dry as possible. In the winter, pay special attention to places where snow can enter, such as in loose mittens or snow boots.

MPD CONTINUES EFFORTS TO KEEP COMMUNITY MEMBERS EDUCATED ON FILING POLICE COMMENDATIONS AND COMPLAINTS

The Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) is committed to providing quality, professional service to all members of the community. The MPD does its best to recognize individuals who provide exemplary service. Community members or visitors to DC who have had a positive experience with an MPD officer or civilian employee are invited to share their positive experiences by submitting a commendation.

Sometimes, however, individuals may feel that a member of the MPD has failed to meet that standard by engaging in misconduct or using excessive force. In these situations, individuals are encouraged to report this information to the MPD or the District of Columbia's Office of Police Complaints (OPC). The Office of Police Complaints is a District Government agency that is independent of the MPD, and its mission is to receive, investigate, and resolve police misconduct complaints filed by the public against MPD and DC Housing Authority Police Department officers.

The MPD will investigate all complaints, including anonymous complaints, in a fair, thorough, and impartial manner. OPC has the authority to investigate complaints alleging harassment; use of unnecessary or excessive force; use of language or conduct that is insulting, demeaning, or humiliating; discrimination; retaliation for filing a complaint with OPC; or failure to wear required identification or refusal to provide name and badge number when requested to do so by a member of the public.

» For more information on filing a commendation or complaint, visit:

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/file-citizen-complaint>

» OPC complaint forms and information sheets can be obtained by:

- Visiting OPC at: Office of Police Complaints,
1400 I Street, NW, Suite 700,
Washington, DC 20005
- Calling OPC at 202-727-3838
- Calling the OPC 24-hour, toll-free hotline at 866-588-0569
- Visiting OPC's website, policecomplaints.dc.gov

» OPC complaint forms can be submitted:

- In person or by mail to the address above
- By fax to 202-727-9182
- By dropping forms off at any MPDC district station

» To file a complaint with the MPD, you may:

- Visit any MPD District station or facility
- Call 202-727-4385 or the 24-hour hotline at 800-298-4006
- Visit MPD's website at mpdc.dc.gov
- Email the Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB) at citizen.complaints@dc.gov
- Call the IAB TTY number at 202-898-1454
- Submit your complaint in person at any MPD facility or by mail to this address:
Internal Affairs Bureau, Metropolitan Police Department,
3244 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE,
Washington, DC, 20020
- Fax your complaint to 202-727-5116

NEWS & NOTES

Also Noteworthy

Join the MPD Reserve Corps. The MPD Reserve Corps, a volunteer policing program is seeking new members. Applications are now

being accepted at <http://dcpolicejobs.dc.gov>.

Tell Us How We're Doing. MPD is now part of Grade DC. We invite you to share your thoughts on our service — positive or negative — through MPD's email groups, our social media, or by visiting the Grade DC website. Get more information at <http://grade.dc.gov>.

Preventing terrorism is everybody's

business. If you SEE something, SAY something. Call the MPD at (202) 727-9099 to report suspicious activity that has already occurred. Call 911 to report in-progress threats or emergencies. Learn how you can help fight terrorism at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/operationTIPP>.

Information, ideas, or comments about this service?

Send an e-mail to **KAYLIN CASTELLI**, Manager of Internet Communications, at kaylin.castelli@dc.gov

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