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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**EXCESSIVE HEAT WARNING FOR OKALOOSA COUNTY
-- HEALTH OFFICIALS CAUTION ABOUT HEAT EXHAUSTION --**

OKALOOSA COUNTY -- The National Weather Service has issued an excessive heat warning for Okaloosa County. Dr. Karen Chapman, Director of the Okaloosa County Health Department, reminds individuals to be aware of the warning signs of heat exhaustion.

WARNING SIGNS of heat exhaustion vary, but may include the following.

- Heavy sweating
- Paleness
- Muscle cramps
- Tiredness
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fainting
- Skin: may be cool and moist
- Pulse rate: fast and weak
- Breathing: fast and shallow

Heat exhaustion is a milder form of heat-related illness that can develop after exposure to high temperatures and inadequate or unbalanced replacement of fluids. Those most prone to heat exhaustion are elderly people, people with high blood pressure, and people working or exercising in a hot environment. In excessive heat, you:

- should wear light-colored, loose-fitting, breathable clothing (such as cotton),
- take more breaks,
- take breaks in the shade or a cool area, and
- drink water frequently – enough that you never become thirsty.

If heat exhaustion is untreated, it may progress to heat stroke. **Seek medical attention immediately if any of the following occurs.**

- Symptoms are severe
- The victim has heart problems or high blood pressure

Otherwise, help the victim to cool off and seek medical attention if symptoms worsen or last longer than one hour.

WHAT TO DO if heat exhaustion is suspected:

Cooling measures that may be effective include the following.

- Drinking cool, nonalcoholic beverages, as directed by your physician
- Resting in an air-conditioned environment
- Taking a cool shower, bath or sponge bath
- Wearing lightweight clothing
- Preventing sunburn (which damages the skin's ability to dissipate heat), by wearing sunscreen of 30 spf

For more information, please contact your local county health department or visit: www.doh.state.fl.us.

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