



PROCLAMATION

Heat Awareness Week May 18-22, 2026

WHEREAS, extreme heat causes heat-related illness or death and worsening of cardiovascular, respiratory and cerebrovascular diseases, with the greatest risks occurring in the first weeks of the heat season, which starts in June, as people's bodies adjust to the heat; and

WHEREAS, climate change causes more frequent and severe heat waves, with Orange County experiencing temperatures greater than 95 degrees on 8 days on average per year between 1983 and 2014, the National Weather Service issuing 12 heat advisories and 1 excessive heat warning in 2024, and the county expected to experience high temperatures on 28 to 41 days per year by the 2060s;

WHEREAS, the summer of 2025 included the second warmest July on record statewide and the warmest month ever recorded based on nighttime low temperatures, North Carolina experienced more than 5,700 heat-related illness emergency department visits, a far higher number than recorded in each of the past five summers; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina's urban and rural communities now have more nights with temperatures above 70 degrees and heat-related illnesses and deaths increase when temperatures stay high overnight; and

WHEREAS, heat-related illnesses can affect anyone but disproportionately affects infants and children, pregnant women, older adults, outdoor workers, athletes, people with underlying health conditions, and low-income individuals who are more likely to live in locations without easy access to air conditioning; and

WHEREAS, summer temperatures can be up to 11 degrees warmer in urban heat islands than surrounding areas, with these heat islands in low-income communities of color with fewer trees and more pavement; and

WHEREAS, heat-related illnesses are preventable, monitoring and minimizing risks are a shared responsibility, and North Carolina has collaborated with scientists, health experts and community leaders to develop heat resilience resources and has recognized heat's threat to the health and well-being of residents; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Hillsborough partnered with Orange County and the towns of Carrboro and Chapel Hill to adopt a heat action plan to build local resilience to the health impacts of extreme heat and other climate hazards;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mark Bell, mayor of the Town of Hillsborough, do hereby proclaim May 18-22, 2026, as "Heat Awareness Week" in Hillsborough and commend its observance to all people.

FUTHERMORE, the Hillsborough Board of Commissioners encourages everyone to sign up for OC Alerts, monitor the county's website and social media for heat advisories and warnings, and take simple steps during heat waves to stay safe, such as reducing time outside, visiting cooling centers if without air conditioning, and staying hydrated.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused this seal of the Town of Hillsborough to be affixed this 11th day of May in the year 2026.

Mark Bell, Mayor
Town of Hillsborough