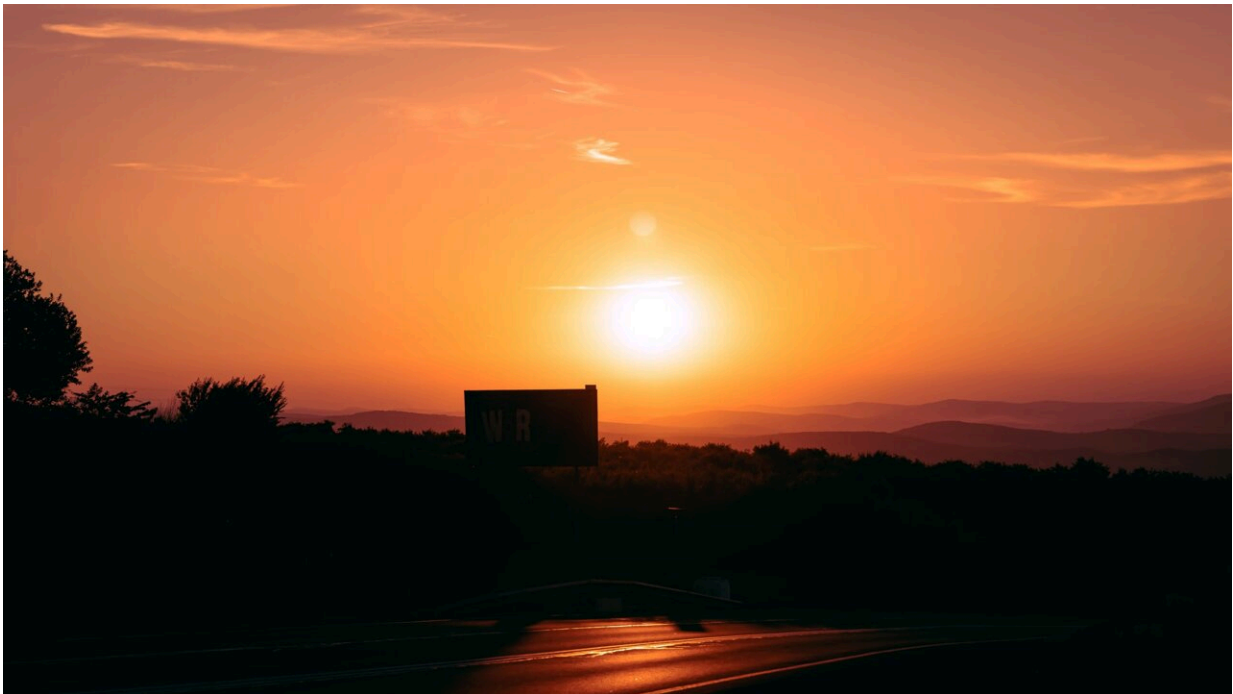


Scientists suggest naming heatwaves as part of early warning system to save lives

July 12 2022, by Andrew Mackenzie



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The U.K. should name heatwaves as part of an effective early warning system to protect the most vulnerable, says leading U.K. scientists.

As the U.K. faces a [heatwave](#) and potentially record breaking temperatures this week, with climate change increasing the frequency of such events in the future, The Physiological Society is calling for

heatwaves to be named similar to storms.

The Physiological Society is the largest group of physiologists in Europe and is focused on understanding how the body works, including how the body copes in response to heat and [extreme weather](#). Calls for improved early warning systems for heatwaves is included in a report The Society is launching this Wednesday (13 July) at an event in London on the health policy implications of climate change. The report highlights policy priorities for Government in response to climate change's impact on [human health](#), as well as identifying areas of gaps in research that need to be addressed.

The U.K. Met Office currently names storms alphabetically to aid the communication of approaching [severe weather](#) through the media and government agencies. Seville has recently started naming heatwaves as excessively [hot weather](#) becomes more frequent.

Speaking ahead of the event on Wednesday, Professor Mike Tipton from The Physiological Society, said:

"This week could potentially see record breaking temperatures here in the U.K. Just like preparing for a storm in winter, people need to take action to keep themselves and their loved ones safe.

"Extreme heat isn't just a problem on your summer holidays, due to [climate change](#) we are increasingly seeing very hot weather here in the U.K. Even one day of very hot weather can present a risk, but consecutive days of high temperatures triggers a heatwave that requires specific actions to keep people safe.

"As part of raising awareness of the threat from heatwaves in the U.K., heatwaves should be named in the same way as we name storms. It makes the risk to health clear and that people can't expect to continue as

normal during the heatwave. This will aid the communication of approaching heatwaves through the media and government agencies. This is especially helpful for those who don't have as ready access to the internet or weather apps on smartphones.

"As the science of how the body works, physiology explains the impact of hot weather on our health. We can use this knowledge to advise on ways to keep the body cool and design early warning systems that provide tailored advice to the most vulnerable or those who have to work in the heat.

"This will enable people to better plan ahead and take measures that could save lives.

"Such knowledge can also assist in smart building design and [urban development](#), both of which will amongst the developments needed going into a hotter future."

Provided by The Physiological Society

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