

# A deadly heat wave is blanketing the South and spreading east

June 29 2023, by MICHAEL GOLDBERG, ADRIAN SANZ and JIM SALTER

---



Lucas Harrington, age 7, cools off in a mister at Kauffman Stadium as temperatures approach 100 degrees fahrenheit before a baseball game between the Kansas City Royals and the Cleveland Guardians, Wednesday, June 28, 2023, in Kansas City, Mo. Credit: AP Photo/Charlie Riedel

An oppressive heat wave blamed for at least 13 deaths in Texas and one in Louisiana blanketed the South on Thursday, as authorities warned of dangerous, triple-digit temperatures.

Extreme heat and humidity increased the potential for [heat-related illnesses](#), and lingering [power outages](#) exacerbated the misery in some areas. Officials urged residents to stay hydrated, shelter in air-conditioned rooms and check on friends and neighbors.

The unusually high temperatures were brought on by a heat dome that has taxed the Texas [power](#) grid and brought record highs to parts of that state, according to meteorologists. That dome is spreading eastward and is expected to be centered over the mid-South by the weekend.

The National Weather Service in Memphis issued an excessive heat warning for west Tennessee, eastern Arkansas, north Mississippi and the bootheel of Mississippi for Thursday and Friday as it forecast heat indexes to rise above 110 degrees (43 Celsius).

The heat posed a challenge for residents of Memphis and other Shelby County cities who still had no power after strong storms Sunday that produced winds of up to 90 mph and knocked down trees and [power lines](#).

To get some relief while waiting for power to be restored, John Manger, 74, and his wife were sitting in shady spots outside their sweltering home in the Memphis suburb of Bartlett and taking cold showers.



John Manger, 74, talks about dealing with scorching heat in the Memphis suburb of Bartlett, Tenn., on Thursday, June 29, 2023. He and his wife lost power during strong storms on Sunday and were waiting for it to be restored. Credit: AP Photo/ Adrian Sainz

"I just suck it up, with a washcloth, towel, whatever. I just sit in my chair by the window, and maybe get a breeze," said Manger, who is retired.

As of Thursday morning, more than 20,000 homes and businesses remained without power in the county, according to the local utility, Memphis Light, Gas and Water. Dozens of crews were working to restore power, the utility said.

"Please, please, PLEASE make frequent checks on your [family](#)



[members](#), friends and neighbors today, especially if they are part of a vulnerable population," the city of Memphis said in a statement.

Cooling centers opened, and those seeking relief from the heat also were advised to go to splash pads, libraries and malls.

Eleven of the Texas heat-related deaths occurred in Webb County, which includes Laredo. The dead ranged in age from 60 to 80 years old, and many had other health conditions, according to the county medical examiner, Dr. Corinne Stern. Also, two Florida residents died while hiking in [extreme heat](#) at Big Bend National Park. In Louisiana, a 49-year-old man died Sunday in Shreveport after he was found lying on a sidewalk.



Judy Breland Morris cools off and washes herself off with a hose after she claims she was maced near Jackson Square, during an excessive heat warning in New Orleans, Tuesday, June 27, 2023. Credit: Sophia Germer/The Times-Picayune/The New Orleans Advocate via AP



Lifeguard Callum Glover cools off during a safety break at the Memorial Park swimming pool on Wednesday, June 28, 2023, in Houston. There is a 10-minute safety break each hour in which swimmers must exit the pool, and lifeguards take a break and rotate then their stations. Credit: Melissa Phillip/Houston Chronicle via AP





Utility workers use a series of umbrellas as they attempt to stay in the shade while working on a gas line in Jackson, Miss., Wednesday, June 28, 2023. Credit: AP Photo/Rogelio V. Solis



A fisherman reels in his catch as the sun rises over the Atlantic Ocean, Wednesday, June 28, 2023, in Bal Harbour, Fla. A heat dome is spreading eastward from Texas and by the weekend is expected to be centered over the mid-South, said meteorologist Bryan Jackson with the National Weather Service in College Park, Maryland. Credit: AP Photo/Wilfredo Lee

In St. Louis, the forecast called for temperatures of around 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) on Thursday and Friday, and 95 degrees Fahrenheit (35 degrees Celsius) on Saturday before a slight cool-down on Sunday. [Smoke from Canadian wildfire](#) s have combined with the [heat](#) and humidity to [worsen air quality](#).

Gentry Trotter, who runs [Cooldownstlouis.org](#), said volunteers were taking donated window air conditioners to the elderly and needy.

Trotter recently went into the home of an 83-year-old woman, measured the indoor temperature and found it was 105 degrees Fahrenheit (40.6 degrees Celsius). Still, she refused to accept an air conditioner.

"Somebody needs to convince her that if she doesn't have a blasting air conditioner, she's going to die," Trotter said.

© 2023 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed without permission.

Citation: A deadly heat wave is blanketing the South and spreading east (2023, June 29) retrieved 28 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2023-06-deadly-blanketing-south-east.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.