

# Dangerous heat wave baking US Southwest brings triple digit temperatures and fire risk to California

July 13 2023, by Christopher Weber



A homeless man sleeps under the sun in the Hollywood district of Los Angeles, Wednesday, July 12, 2023. Southern California is bracing for a heat wave expected to hit this weekend, bringing "elevated" fire danger and increasing the chance of heat-related illness. Credit: AP Photo/Damian Dovarganes

After a historically wet winter and a cloudy spring, California's summer was in full swing Thursday as a heat wave that's been scorching much of the U.S. Southwest brings triple digit temperatures and an increased risk of wildfires.

Blistering conditions will build Friday and throughout the weekend in the central and southern parts of California, where many residents should prepare for the hottest weather of the year, the National Weather Service warned.

Midday highs were mostly expected to be above 100 degrees (37.7 C), and desert areas could reach 120 (48.8 C), forecasters said. Little relief was expected overnight, when temperatures could remain in the 80s (above 26.6 C). An excessive heat watch was in effect through Sunday for interior Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties.

"Please plan accordingly, this is not the time to be hiking or be outside for long durations," the weather service's LA office said on Twitter. "If you need to work outside, shift hours to the early morning, take frequent breaks and hydrate!"

Employers were reminded to adhere to regulations that require outdoor workers are given water, shade and regular breaks to cool off. The state will be performing spot checks at work sites to make sure the rules are being followed, said Jeff Killip with the Division of Occupational Safety & Health.



A dog owner walks in a tree shade in the early morning on Wednesday, July 12, 2023, in Los Angeles. Credit: AP Photo/Richard Vogel

Across the U.S., more than 111 million people were under extreme heat advisories, watches and warnings, mostly in the Southwest, the [National Weather Service reported](#) Wednesday.

Forecasters said the long-duration heat wave is extremely dangerous, especially for elderly people, homeless residents and other vulnerable populations. The heat could persist into next week as a high pressure dome moves west from Texas. In Arizona, temperatures have hit 110 degrees (43.3 C) for more than a dozen consecutive days.

Horse racing events were canceled at the California State Fair near the

state capital over concerns for animal safety.

Meanwhile, California's wildfire season was ramping up amid the hot, dry conditions with a series of blazes erupting across the state this week, said Secretary Wade Crowfoot of the Natural Resources Agency.



A woman walks her dog in the shade, Tuesday, July 11, 2023, in Los Angeles. Southern California is expecting high temperatures between 100 to 110 degrees Fahrenheit later this week according to the National Weather Service. Credit: AP Photo/Ryan Sun

"As we get deeper into the summer and vegetation that grew up during the wet spring dries out, we are seeing an uptick in wildfire activity,"

Crowfoot said Wednesday during a state media briefing.

Crowfoot said [global climate change](#) was "supercharging" heat waves. California has instituted a \$400 million extreme heat action plan to protect workers, help vulnerable communities and assist local communities in opening cooling centers.

The plan, announced last year as an update to state recommendations made a decade earlier, has a broad range of near- and long-term goals. Elements include increasing public awareness through targeted communication, statewide public health monitoring to identify heat illness events early on, and developing codes and regulations to protect everything from schools to water supplies from extreme heat.



A man uses an umbrella to avoid the midday sun, Tuesday, July 11, 2023, in Los Angeles. Southern California is expecting high temperatures between 100 to 110 degrees Fahrenheit later this week according to the National Weather Service. Credit: AP Photo/Ryan Sun



An elderly gentleman takes a morning stroll along Balboa Lake in Balboa Park in Los Angeles on Wednesday, July 12, 2023. Credit: AP Photo/Richard Vogel



A man exercises shirtless as temperatures rise at MacArthur Park, Tuesday, July 11, 2023, in Los Angeles. Los Angeles is expecting high temperatures between 100 to 110 degrees Fahrenheit later this week according to the National Weather Service. Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez



Bus riders wait in the shade to shield themselves from the midday sun, Tuesday, July 11, 2023, in Los Angeles. Southern California is expecting high temperatures between 100 to 110 degrees Fahrenheit later this week according to the National Weather Service .Credit: AP Photo/Ryan Sun





A woman walks with a bag of groceries under the midday sun, Tuesday, July 11, 2023, in Los Angeles. Southern California is expecting high temperatures between 100 to 110 degrees Fahrenheit later this week according to the National Weather Service. Credit: AP Photo/Ryan Sun



Kristin Peterson tries to cool off with a cold bandana at Sunrise Homeless Navigation Center in Austin, Texas, Tuesday July 11, 2023, during a heat advisory with temperatures expected to top 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Credit: Jay Janner/Austin American-Statesman via AP



A man lies on the beach, Tuesday, July 11, 2023, in Los Angeles. Los Angeles is expecting high temperatures between 100 to 110 degrees Fahrenheit later this week according to the National Weather Service. Credit: AP Photo/Ryan Sun



A man takes a break in the shade, Tuesday, July 11, 2023, in Los Angeles. Southern California is expecting high temperatures between 100 to 110 degrees Fahrenheit later this week according to the National Weather Service. Credit: AP Photo/Ryan Sun



Young fishermen cast their lines along the banks of Balboa Lake in Balboa Park in Los Angeles on Wednesday, July 12, 2023. Credit: AP Photo/Richard Vogel

Officials said the state's power system, which was strained to the point of widespread blackouts in recent years, has been fortified and should be able to withstand the latest heat wave. The California Independent System Operator, which runs the electricity grid, said battery storage capacity reached 5,600 megawatts on July 1—enough to power more than 3.8 million homes for up to four hours before recharging.

"The batteries being added to the grid are charged during the day, when solar power is abundant, and dispatched primarily in the evening hours when demand is still high and the sun is setting and solar capacity

diminishing," Cal ISO said in a statement.

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