



*Empowering Elders.
Strengthening Communities.*

Mike DeWine, Governor
Ursel J. McElroy, Director

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: (614) 644-6230
bgianforcaro@age.ohio.gov

With hot, stormy days in the forecast, Ohio Department of Aging encourages Ohioans to check on older loved ones and neighbors

Assess risks, check for vital supplies, and ensure access to help if needed

Columbus, Ohio – Forecasters are predicting high temperatures and the possibility of dangerous storms over much of Ohio for the first half of this week. The Ohio Department of Aging reminds residents that older adults often have a harder time adjusting to weather extremes than others and encourages all Ohioans to check on older loved ones and neighbors before, during, and after severe weather.

“High temperatures coupled with storms that could lead to power outages, flooding, and more, can be disruptive to any of us, but can be more so for older adults,” said Ursel J. McElroy, director of the department. “You can help ensure the health and safety of your older loved ones, friends, and neighbors with a simple phone call or visit.”

The department recommends a three-step approach to checking on older loved ones:

1. Assess risks: Do they appear alert and aware? Are they safe and healthy, and do they have the tools to stay that way? Is their home a comfortable temperature? Are they eating and drinking regularly? Can they move around their home safely? Do they need medical attention for illness or injury?
2. Check vital supplies: Do they have access to clean drinking water? Are they able to cook and safely store food? Do they have access to healthy, non-perishable food that can be prepared without electricity? Do they have access to needed medications and medical supplies (such as oxygen or lifts)?
3. Determine access to help: If their home is too hot or otherwise unsafe to remain in, do they have somewhere else they can go and a way to get there? Whom will they call if they need help? Do they have a phone that will work even if the power goes out? If they have a cell phone, can they keep it charged?

Your area agency on aging can help older adults locate and access assistance to stay safe during severe weather. Resources include cooling centers, access to water, assistance with utilities, and more. Call 1-866-243-5678 to be connected to the agency serving your community.

Ohioans who live in nursing homes can also be at increased risk from severe weather. The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman at the Department of Aging advises family members and concerned

friends to call loved ones' nursing homes to check conditions there and ask how the facility is staffed. Call 1-800-282-1206 for assistance.

Visit www.aging.ohio.gov/safeathome for additional tips and resources to prepare for severe weather and other emergencies.

About ODA – The Ohio Department of Aging serves and advocates for the needs of Ohioans age 60 and older, as well as their families, caregivers and communities. Programs include home and community based long-term supports and services, as well as initiatives to promote health and wellness throughout the lifespan. Visit www.aging.ohio.gov.

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