Hot, hot, hot

BY MIKE EADS
THE JOURNAL

WESTMINSTER — The 100-plus degree temperatures are going to linger for a few days, forcing Upstate residents to find ways to contend with the oppressive heat.

Area lakes are sure to be crowded this weekend, as will the Westminster City Pool. An eager crowd of daycare kids and adults were gathered outside waiting for the pool to open Friday at 11 a.m.

"Usually it's not as bad on the weekends because we don't have any daycare groups coming," said lifeguard John Douglas. "We expect to be busy," due to this weekend's heat.

Walhalla and Seneca residents are forced to use the Westminster pool because their city pools are shuttered for lack of funding.

"I see kids come over here from Walhalla and Seneca," said schoolteacher Kathy Ladd, a pool regular. "I really hope they fix those pools."

Ladd and the others at the pool were slathered with sunscreen Friday and taking frequent dips in the water to beat the heat.

The sunny, 100-plus degree weather is here to stay through Monday, with temperatures only dropping to 80 in the evenings. Rain doesn't appear in the forecast again until Tuesday or Wednesday, and temperatures will linger in the 90s.

Meanwhile, Oconee County's Senior Solutions office is keeping a close eye on its clients. Manager Deborah Cobb is telling everyone who comes in, as well as the 235 clients who get home delivered meals, to drink plenty of fluids, especially water, every 30 to 40 minutes and try to stay out of the heat.

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Local landscaper Caleb Potrafka hydrates in between jobs on Friday in Seneca. Lots of fluids are recommended for everyone in the Upstate this weekend, as the 100-plus temperatures can trigger dehydration and heat stroke.

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Cobb said many seniors have already made their arrangements to deal with the heat.

"Most of our folks are going to stay with their families," Cobb said.

United Way of Oconee County has already given out all of the fans and air conditioners it has received this year, but more could be on the way for senior and low-income residents.

"We're hoping to get more in by the end of next week," said administrative assistant Kim Ellis. "We are accepting donations."

Ellis also suggested that residents in need dial 211, the United Way phone clearinghouse of local agencies and aid programs. However, the 211 operator contacted by The Journal on Friday was unable to source any fans or air conditioners.

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