Use this checklist, along with your Business Continuity Plan to prepare your business for a heatwave.

Extreme heat events can have a detrimental impact on businesses – affecting health and wellbeing, energy and infrastructure, public transport and agriculture. Heatwaves have caused more deaths in Australia than any other natural hazard. Use this checklist to prepare your business in advance and take action to reduce potential heatwave impacts. See the Department of Human Services (DHHS) website for further information on heatwaves see the public health alerts page at [www.dhhs.tas.gov.au](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/alerts)

General

* Consider whether an extreme heat event is a risk to your business. For information on extreme heat, see the DHHS website[www.dhhs.tas.gov.au](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/alerts)
* Include risk mitigation strategies for extreme heat in your Business Continuity Plan. A Business Continuity Plan template is available from [www.business.tas.gov.au](http://www.business.tas.gov.au)
* Think about your insurance needs in relation to extreme heat and make sure your chosen policy provides an appropriate level of cover for your business and that you understand any special requirements.
* Keep a back-up copy of critical documents and business data in a secure off-site location in case you cannot attend the office during a period of extreme heat.

Infrastructure and property

* Consider how heat affects temperatures inside your buildings. This will depend on past experience, building age, materials, design and aspect.
* Review and consider how you will cool your work environment. If you don’t have air conditioning, consider alternative cooling (for example, fans, windows, blinds, etc.).
* If you have air conditioning, ensure that it has been recently serviced.
* Consider sensitive equipment such as IT and communications equipment which may be damaged by extreme heat. Check the temperature in your server room and consider cooling methods if it gets too warm.
* Animals can be particularly vulnerable to heat. If your business involves animals, make sure they have shade and cool water to last the day.

Staff and business visitors

* Ensure all staff and guests are aware of emergency evacuation procedures and familiar with their roles during an evacuation, including knowing the trigger for activating emergency plans and how this information will be communicated.
* Ensure your staff and guests know where to access official sources of information in an emergency (for example, TasALERT website [www.tasalert.tas.gov.au](http://www.tasalert.tas.gov.au) and social media and listen in to the emergency broadcaster, ABC local radio ).
* Consider how you would communicate information to staff and guests or customers in the event of an emergency (for example, bulletins, meetings, notice board, or social media).
* Ensure a list of emergency and staff contact numbers is available to all staff.
* Ensure you have an appropriate number of staff trained in first aid. Make sure that they know the symptoms and first aid treatment for heat stress, heat exhaustion and heat stroke and that the contents of your first aid kit are regularly checked and stocked. Further information about first aid requirements is available from WorkSafe Tasmania [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au)
* Ensure staff and guests know to stay hydrated during periods of extreme heat. It is recommended that individuals drink two to three litres of water a day, even if they do not feel thirsty.
* If staff members are required to wear uniforms or personal protective clothing during periods of extreme heat, provide lightweight, light coloured options.
* If required to work outdoors, provide staff with adequate personal protective equipment (for example, hat, sunglasses, sunscreen). Consider whether it is safe to work on high heat days.
* Contact your suppliers during periods of extreme heat to confirm whether their deliveries and movements will be disrupted.

During an emergency, keep yourself, your staff and guests updated by checking the TasAlert website [www.alert.tas.gov.au](http://www.alert.tas.gov.au) In periods of extreme heat, avoid strenuous activities, and keep hydrated. Cool your property by keeping curtains and blinds closed during the day and where possible, allow ventilation overnight.