



## Summer Hazards Emergency Department (ED) Visits Situational Report

Rapid Health Information NetwOrk Washington State Department of Health Date Prepared: June 16, 2025 Data Date Range: May 01, 2023 to October 31, 2023

Summer hazards are defined as outdoor conditions, extreme weather events, or recreational activities and can cause various adverse health effects resulting in healthcare visits. This report contains weather data and analyses of healthcare encounter data for summer hazards, including suspected heat-related illness (HRI), asthma, fire and smoke-inhalation related visits, drowning or submersion events, and boating-related emergency department (ED) visits based on data reported to the Rapid Health Information NetwOrk (RHINO).

### Summary (May 01, 2023 to October 31, 2023)

- 1508 HRI ED visits were identified. The highest volume of HRI ED visits was 93 visits on August 15 .
- 159 HRI hospital admissions were identified.
- Smoke-related visits were identified in 362 ED visits.
- Asthma-related visits were identified in 42553 ED visits.
- Drowning or submersion related visits were identified in 217 ED visits.
- Boating-related visits were identified in 281 ED visits.





## HRI ED Visits

Extreme heat may lead to heat-related illness (HRI), particularly in those with chronic conditions, pregnant individuals, young children and older adults, and those who work or recreate outdoors. HRI ED visits were elevated in mid-May, throughout July, and highest during mid-August. These elevated levels correspond with heat waves and elevated heat risk in different areas of the state. To reduce the risk of HRI, stay in indoor air-conditioned spaces as you are able or plan outdoor activities during cooler times of the day, drink plenty of fluids, and take frequent breaks when working outdoors.



Daily Count of HRI ED Visits

#### Count of HRI ED Visits by Facility Location May 01, 2023 to October 31, 2023







## **Populations Impacted**

Table 1: Demographics of All HRI ED Visits May 01, 2023 - October 31, 2023

	Count $(\%)$
Age Group	
0-4 years	47(3.1)
5-17 years	141 (9.4)
18-44 years	610 (40.5)
45-64 years	360(23.9)
65+ years	349(23.1)
Sex	
Female	637 (42.2)
Male	$869\ (57.6)$
Race	
Asian	26(1.7)
Black or African American	68 (4.5)
American Indian or Alaska Native	53 (3.5)
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	13 (0.9)
White	1110(73.6)
Multiracial	<10
Other Race	$156\ (10.3)$
Unknown	75 (5)
Ethnicity	
Hispanic or Latino	179(11.9)
Not Hispanic or Latino	1254 (83.2)
Unknown	75(5)

\*Visits with unknown age and unknown/other sex were <10.





## Smoke-Related ED Visits

Smoke-related ED visits are related to any smoke inhalation and are not specific to wildfire smoke. Smokerelated ED visits were elevated on and after the fourth of July due to fireworks, during mid-August possibly due to the presence of wildfire smoke, and at other times due to localized events (such as house fires). Most of Washington experienced wildfire smoke from 8/19-21, while North-Central and Eastern Washington experienced smoky conditions for longer. There were periods of more localized wildfire smoke in areas near major fires at different points throughout the summer. Learn more about how to prepare for smoke here and about past wildfire smoke seasons on the WA Smoke blog.



#### Daily Count of Smoke-Related ED Visits

## Count of Smoke–Related ED Visits by Facility Location May 01, 2023 to October 31, 2023







## Asthma ED Visits

Outdoor air pollutants, indoor environmental contaminants, climate, exercise, colds and other respiratory infections, among other causes, can trigger or exacerbate asthma symptoms. Asthma visits slightly declined in July and August.



Daily Count of Asthma-Related ED Visits

Count of Asthma–Related ED Visits by Facility Location May 01, 2023 to October 31, 2023







## Drowning or Submersion ED Visits

Water-related recreational activities may lead to an increase in submersions and drownings, most are preventable. Drowning and submersion ED visits were elevated in July and August.



### Daily Count of Drowning or Submersion Related ED Visits

Count of Drowning or Submersion–Related ED Visits by Facility Location May 01, 2023 to October 31, 2023







## Boating-Related ED Visits

Recreational boating can lead to serious injuries on all types of vessels including motorized boats, sail boats, jet skis, and personal watercraft (including kayaks, canoes, and more). To boat safely, it is recommended to wear a life jacket, check the weather conditions, bring all essential safety equipment, and share a plan that includes your contact information with route details with your family or friends before heading out on the water. Boating-related ED visits were elevated from mid-July through August.



#### Daily Count of Boating-Related ED Visits

# Count of Boating–Related ED Visits by Facility Location May 01, 2023 to October 31, 2023







#### Data Notes

100% of non-federal EDs in Washington State submit data to RHINO. There are no EDs located in Douglas, Skamania, or Wahkiakum counties. These data are intended to be used for surveillance purposes only. Analyses are based on preliminary information that may change over time. Counts are ED visits or hospitalization events, not unique individuals. Dates are the date that a healthcare encounter began. Maximum temperature (F) and PM2.5 (ug/m3) levels are the maximum values across the state on each day. Air quality (PM2.5) data is obtained from regulatory monitoring sites managed and collected by regional clean air agencies and the Washington State Department of Ecology and provided by AirNow. Temperature data is obtained from the CF6 dataset maintained by the National Weather Service.

#### Visit Definitions

Heat-related Illness: Identified through the CDC ESSENCE Chief Complaint Discharge Diagnosis (CCDD) query category, Heat-Related Illness V2, using free text terms such as "heat," "sun stroke," and "hyperthermia" and ICD-10-CM diagnosis codes (including E900, T67, X30, W92) among ED chief complaints and discharge diagnoses.

Smoke-related: Identified using ICD-10-CM diagnosis codes (J70.5, T59.81, X01.1, X08.8) among ED discharge diagnoses. This query is not specific to wildfire smoke.

Asthma: Identified through the CDC ESSENCE Chief Complaint Discharge Diagnosis (CCDD) query category, Asthma V1, using free text terms such as "asthma," and ICD-10-CM diagnosis code J45 among ED chief complaints and discharge diagnoses.

**Drowning or submersion**: Identified through the CDC ESSENCE Chief Complaint Discharge Diagnosis (CCDD) query category, Unintentional Drowning V1, using free text terms such as "drown", "under water" and ICD-10-CM diagnosis codes (including T751, V90, V91, V92, W16, W22.041) among ED chief complaints and discharge diagnoses.

**Boating-related**: Identified through the CDC ESSENCE Chief Complaint Discharge Diagnosis (CCDD) query category, Recreational Boating Incidents V1, using free text terms such as "boat", "jet ski", and ICD-10-CM diagnosis codes (including V90-94, W16.7) among ED chief complaints and discharge diagnoses.

#### **Contact Information**

#### Point of Contact for Follow-Up

Name: RHINO Team Agency/Organization: Washington State Department of Health Email/Phone: RHINO@doh.wa.gov

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