FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Beat the Heat

Elmira – The Finger Lakes region is heating up. The National Weather Service is predicting dangerous heat temperatures in the 90’s this weekend. The Chemung County Health Department recommends residents take a few simple precautions to stay cool and prevent heat-related injuries.

Stay hydrated. Increase your water intake. If working or playing outside, you will need 2-4 cups of water an hour to keep your body temperature normal and to avoid dehydration. It is best to avoid sugary beverages, alcohol, and caffeine. Remind others to drink plenty of water as well. During extreme heat, leave pets at home with plenty of water and a place to stay cool.

Stay cool. Seek shade when you are outside and close your blinds while indoors. Wear lightweight, light colored clothing. Try a cool bath or shower during the day or evening. During a heat spell, don’t rely solely on a fan to keep cool; seek out air-conditioned spaces. In Chemung County, the mall and libraries can serve as “cooling centers,” as a free, public location to keep out of the heat. Public pools and splash pads can also help keep you cool, but remember the sunscreen. Finally, be aware of people at high risk for heat-related injuries and lend a helping hand. Check regularly on elderly or ill family, friends, and neighbors.

Stay informed. Know the weather forecast and check for heat alerts when planning outdoor activities. Strenuous outdoor activities should wait until a cooler day or a cooler time of day, like early morning or later evening. Learn the symptoms of heat-related illness. Dehydration starts with thirst and progresses to headache, faintness and confusion, particularly in the elderly. Heat exhaustion includes excessive sweating, cold clammy skin, dizziness, nausea and muscle cramps. Heat stroke is a life threatening emergency. Symptoms include hot, dry skin, confusion, seizures, and loss of consciousness. Call 911 if you suspect someone is experiencing heat stroke.

Remember, extreme heat can affect your family, neighbors, and pets. Please look before you lock your car, making sure there are no children or animals inside. Car interiors heat up quickly, jumping nearly 20 degrees in 10 minutes.

Enjoy the weekend in a safe way by sticking to these stay-cool tips. For additional resources go to www.chemungcountyhealth.org/factsheets