



Sun Safety Event Checklist

As the organizer of an outdoor event, you can help protect your participants, staff, and volunteers from the sun's harmful rays by providing adequate shade.

Planning Stage:



Observe the sun patterns at the same time of day your event will be held. Note where shade falls and consider the various activities you will have in those spaces.



Consider the following modifications:

Time:

Consider changing the time of the event so that it falls outside peak UVR hours of 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Participants & Staff:

Encourage your participants, staff, and volunteers to take personal sun protection measures in promotional materials, confirmation e-mails, and orientation sessions (see Appendix B).

Ensure that staff and volunteers are able to rotate tasks between shaded or indoor areas and outdoor exposed activities. Avoid having the same people exposed to the direct rays of the sun all day.

When organizing event, advise performers and vendors of options to schedule activities outside 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., especially activities with risk of high UVR exposure.

Location:

Hold presentations, performances, prize draws, and speeches in an area that allows participants to be in the shade.

Consider whether you can hold activities in a different location to have better access to shade.

Place tables, food, and drinks (and their associated lines) in shaded areas.

Highlight shade and cooling stations on any maps, activity routes or set-up plans.

Modifying Structures:

Provide additional temporary shade structures such as umbrellas, awnings or tents when your event site has little natural shade from trees and buildings.

Provide shade in areas that are used primarily by children and adolescents (i.e. play areas, picnic areas, children's performance events, and special school gatherings).

Shade spectator seating with a permanent roof structure or adjustable temporary shade sails. The added weather protection is a co-benefit.

Develop a strategy to deal with indirect ultraviolet radiation. For example, smooth, reflective walls (i.e. concrete) can be modified to reduce the likelihood of indirect UVR. Soft surfaces and those with uneven finishes will reflect smaller amounts of UVR. Vegetation absorbs and scatters UVR which decreases its intensity.

Arrange for cooling station(s) with water in shaded and/or indoor locations.

Day of Event

- Check the UV Index (see Appendix A) and inform staff, volunteers, and participants of recommended sun protection actions.
- Encourage staff and volunteers to follow and model the sun safety behaviours (see Appendix B).
- Check the forecast for temperature and smog alerts and follow recommended precautions.
- Ensure that staff and volunteers rotate into shaded areas to minimize exposure.
- Provide signage and directions to shaded areas and cooling stations.
- Post sun safety information at your event.
- Have announcements during the event to remind staff, volunteers, and participants that water and shaded areas are available and to reapply sunscreen as recommended.

Evaluation:

- Review sun safety actions and record recommendations for future events.

For more information, check out the following resources:

KFL&A Public Health
www.kflapublichealth.ca

Sun Safety Tips Health Information Sheet
Safe Fun in the Sun: Sun Protection Purchasing Guide



Canadian Cancer Society
www.cancer.ca

SunSense – Preventing Skin Cancer booklet



Canadian Dermatology Association
www.dermatology.ca



Health Canada
www.hc-sc.gc.ca



Environment Canada
www.ec.gc.ca

UV Index Forecast
Current Conditions and Forecast



Appendix A

Environment Canada's UV Index

Environment Canada developed the UV Index to inform Canadians about the strength of the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation. UV radiation can cause sunburns, eye cataracts, skin aging, and skin cancer. The higher the UV Index number, the stronger the sun's rays, and the greater the need to take precautions. The table below outlines the sun protection actions recommended at different levels of the UV Index.

UV Index	Description	Sun Protection Actions
0-2	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Minimal sun protection required for normal activity.Wear sunglasses on bright days. If outside for more than one hour, cover up and use sunscreen.Reflection off snow can nearly double UV radiation strength. Wear sunglasses and apply sunscreen.
3-5	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Take precautions – cover up, wear a hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen especially if you will be outside for 30 minutes or more.Look for shade near midday when the sun is strongest.
6-7	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Protection required – UV radiation damages the skin and can cause sunburn.Reduce time in the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. and take full precautions – seek shade, cover up, wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen.
8-10	Very High	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Extra precautions required – unprotected skin will be damaged and can burn quickly.Avoid the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. and take full precautions – seek shade, cover up, wear a hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen.
11+	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Values of 11 or more are very rare in Canada. However, the UV Index can reach 14 or more in the tropics and southern U.S.Take full precautions. Unprotected skin will be damaged and can burn in minutes. Avoid the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., cover up, wear a hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen.White sand and other bright surfaces reflect UV radiation and increase exposure.

Points to remember:

The sun delivers the most UV radiation when it is high overhead at midday in the spring or summer. A good rule of thumb is that if your shadow is shorter than you are, you must protect yourself from the sun.

Don't confuse temperature and UV. Light clouds or a breeze can make you feel cooler – but they don't reduce the UV radiation. UV radiation rays can burn even if it's cold!

UV Radiation Information: www.ec.gc.ca/UV

Weather forecasts: weatheroffice.gc.ca

Source: Environment Canada

Appendix B

Protecting Your Skin

Sun protection should be used when the UV index reaches 3 or above. The UV index shows the level of UV radiation and the potential danger of sun exposure. It can help people make healthy choices during April to September, when the UV index reaches 3 or above in KFL&A. In the fall and winter, those who are vacationing in sunny climates or outdoors enjoying winter sports will need to take precautions.



Shade

- Reduce the time spent outside between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. when the sun's rays are the strongest or when the UV index is 3 or higher. If your shadow is shorter than you are, the sun is at its strongest.
- Create a sun-safe environment with shade or shelter.



Protective Clothing

- Choose clothes that are loose fitting, tightly woven, and lightweight to cover arms and legs.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat (7.5 cm / 3 inch) that protects your head, face, ears, and neck.
- Wear unbreakable sunglasses that offer 100 percent UV protection.



Sunscreen

- Wear a broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen of at least SPF 30.
- Apply sunscreen 20 minutes prior to sun exposure. Reapply every 2 hours and after sweating or swimming.
- Apply an SPF 15 or higher lip balm to the lips.
- Ensure you reach a few often forgotten spots: upper and lower back, tips of ears, neck, and tops of the feet.
- Remember, sunscreen works best with other protection methods; first seek shade and protect your skin with clothing.



Take Extra Caution

- Avoid tanning indoors and outdoors.
- Beware of reflected sun from water, snow, sand, pavement, and walls.
- Don't be fooled by cloudy, foggy or hazy days - over 80% of UV radiation gets through light cloud cover.
- Remember that skin damage caused by sunburns builds up throughout your lifetime.
- Keep children under one year of age out of direct sunlight as much as possible. If you have no choice but to be in the sun, follow all precautions listed above.
- For those caring for children, don't forget to protect your own skin! Children are more likely to protect their skin when they see adults doing it too.