

The STATE

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TEMPERATURES IN '90S

Tar Heels sweating, but no end to heat in sight

RALEIGH — It's just plain hot. Heat and humidity are nothing special or unusual for July in the South, but somehow that doesn't make it feel any better.

At Kill Devil Hills Coin-Operated Launderette, manager Tammy Thompson has to work without an air conditioner or fan.

"It's hot enough where people will sit outside," she said. "It's very, very uncomfortable."

Ms. Thompson has to make trips to the nearby convenience store to cool off.

"This is worse than I've ever seen it," she said.

But Raleigh meteorologist Kermit Keeter said it's always hot in North Carolina in July.

"I was born and raised here. It's not too unusual," he said. "It's just that we haven't had it in a while."

Mr. Keeter said the hot weather has lasted only about two weeks. "If it goes beyond 30 days, it starts to get into the unusual category."

Temperatures are expected to be in the 90s today and could reach 100 in some areas.

Temperatures across the state Friday were in the 90s and reached 101 in Goldsboro and Rocky Mount. In Wilmington, the high was 97. The National Weather Service issued a heat advisory for this afternoon for all of North Carolina except the mountains and Outer Banks.

A heat advisory means the combination of heat and humidity will make it feel as if it is at least 105 degrees. Such weather can produce heat cramps, heat exhaustion and sunstroke.

Hospitals were already treating victims. The Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte has treated 10 people for heat-related problems since they began keeping records June 23, spokesman Scott White said. The patients have succumbed to sunburn, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke, he said.

In Wilmington, the New Hanover Regional Medical Center has treated two people for heat exhaustion since Thursday, spokesman Iris Baker said.