
Letter to Urban Action

Stephanie Romero

Every summer as the weather heats up, my 3-year-old daughter, Sophia and I would make it our routine to head to a mall, library or beach to cool off. This past week, during a mini heat wave, we got a taste of what it is like without those options, as the Shelter-In-Place order is still in effect in Santa Clara County. Some families may have pools, backyards, or air conditioning they could easily turn on and not think twice about. We don't. In our 70-year-old apartment, we could keep windows open and run the fans all day and night.

But my concern is as it gets warmer, and the heat inside becomes unbearable, where would families like mine be able to go to beat the heat? So far, I have kept Sophia inside and not even let her play out in front since we found out the couple that lives next door to the right had COVID-19 weeks ago after returning from their annual trip to Europe. We also found out the whole family that lives directly behind us tested positive as well. Both instances, we did not know it until they were fully recovered or almost recovered. At this point, we're just not sure who has it and who doesn't.

I've been extra vigilant about my 78-year-old neighbor who insists on walking to the corner store without a mask or anything. As much as it gives me a little heart attack every time I see him walk by my window, he's a grown, care-free man and some things are out of our control. Considering we are in a pandemic, we do have some control to be able to come up with creative solutions.

I don't want to sound ungrateful, but what's going to happen when it gets too hot in here, open windows and all?

Stay safe,

Stephanie Romero

