

[MPR News](#) for Headlines, Weather, and Stories



Along Lake Superior, it's not the heat

By [Chris Julin](#), Minnesota Public Radio

July 18, 2001



People who live in Duluth love this time of year. They think it's fun to get outside where they can look at the big lake, and watch out-of-towners huddle on street corners, shivering in their shorts and sandals.

A few times each summer, Minnesota gets blitzed by wall of hot, humid air, and across the state, sweaty people in tank-tops and sundresses point their cars to Lake Superior's North Shore, but for some reason they pack only shorts and swimsuits. It gets warm in Duluth - even hot, once in awhile - but then you get a week like this one.

Consider Monday. It was sunny and almost 90 degrees just a few miles away, but on Duluth's lakefront it was 57 degrees, with fog so thick you see only a few hundred feet. A stiff wind came off the lake, pushing cold air and thick curls of fog across the the "Lakewalk" in Canal Park. Outside one of the waterfront hotels, employee Paul Frish built a fire, with hopes of luring some of the guests outside. He and two joggers were the only people in sight.



Tourists walk in Canal Park. Duluth's fog-shrouded downtown rises behind them.
(MPR Photo/Chris Julin)

"Today it's really quiet. Normally it's a lot busier than this. Normally if you look on any day, you can see people all over the place walking around," Frish says.

As Frish talks, behind him, three different people poke their heads out of their hotel rooms for a moment, and duck back inside.

Paul Frish stands in the swirling fog, looking perfectly comfortable in a short-sleeve shirt. He says he's adjusted since he moved here three years ago.

Across the street, tourists troll the gift shops and art galleries. A middle-aged couple in shorts and sunglasses emerges from a store wearing brand new matching polar-fleece jackets in forest green. On the sidewalk outside a shop called Deco Bay, tinny speakers blast pop music, and customers sift through racks of shirts. Everyone's shopping for long sleeves. A woman named Gail is visiting from Florida. She's wearing long pants and a jacket, but she's about to buy a sweatshirt anyway.

"Well I think I should, if not for me, for my husband, definitely, because he came with nothing. He's in shorts and a short-sleeve shirt," Gail says.

A few feet away, Vicki Lind from Apple Valley is trying to decide on a shirt. Her teenage daughter, Krista, stands nearby wearing shorts and a t-shirt, silently hugging herself against the chilly breeze. Vicki Lind says they drove up for the day from their lake home in Wisconsin, and her daughter didn't bring any extra clothes.

"When we left the cabin it was hot," she says.

The owner of this shop, Simon Miller, says he sold 60 sweatshirts on Monday. "Because people from the city left 90 or 80 degrees, come here, and it's already 50 or 60 and wind, and all day we sell sweatshirt and sweatshirt. We love it," according to Miller.

It's supposed to stay cool in Duluth this week while the rest of the state swelters. Eventually the wind will turn and blow onto the lake, and the air along the shore will heat up.

Until that happens, store owners in Duluth are eager to help underdressed tourists.



Major funding for Minnesota Public Radio's regional Internet activities is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.



Minnesota Public Radio

[Search](#) [Email](#)

© Copyright 2001 & [Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy](#)