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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 16-74
July 25, 2016

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Department of Environmental Protection Issues Safety Alert on Opening Fire Hydrants



HEAT Campaign
by NYC Water

With Continued High Temperatures and an Excessive Heat Watch Issued for Monday, New Yorkers are Reminded that Fire Hydrants Can be Opened Legally and Safely with a City-Approved Spray Cap

New Yorkers are Urged to Report Illegally Opened Fire Hydrants to 311

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) reminds New Yorkers that opening fire hydrants without spray caps is illegal, wasteful, and dangerous. Illegally opened hydrants can lower water pressure and put lives at risk if there is a fire. Children can also be at serious risk, because the powerful force of an open hydrant without a spray cap can knock a child down, causing an injury.

The unauthorized opening of New York City fire hydrants can increase during heat waves. However, opening a hydrant without a spray cap lowers water pressure and can hinder firefighting by reducing the flow of water to hoses and pumps. The reduction of water pressure resulting from illegally opened hydrants can also cause problems at hospitals and other medical facilities. Opening a hydrant illegally can result in fines of up to \$1,000, imprisonment for up to 30 days, or both.

Hydrants can be opened legally if equipped with a City-approved spray cap. One illegally opened hydrant can release more than 1,000 gallons of water per minute, while a hydrant with a spray cap releases 20 to 25 gallons per minute.

More Information

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Spray caps can be obtained by an adult 18 or over, free of charge, at local firehouses.

New Yorkers are urged to report illegally opened fire hydrants to 311. DEP has additional staff on call to respond to reports of illegally opened fire hydrants.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing approximately 1 billion gallons of water each day to more than 9 million residents, including 8.5 million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dep, like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

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