

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#35-16

**NYC COOLING CENTERS WILL REMAIN OPEN THROUGH TUESDAY, JULY 26
AS EXTREME HEAT CONTINUES TO AFFECT THE CITY**

More than 500 cooling centers open across the City today and Tuesday; call 311 or visit www.nyc.gov/beattheheat for locations and hours of operation

Severe thunderstorms are possible later today with the potential for heavy rain and strong winds

July 25, 2016 — With prolonged hot weather continuing to affect the city, New York City cooling centers will remain open through Tuesday, July 26. Cooling centers are operating with extended hours today, with many locations open through 8:00 PM. New Yorkers are advised to call 311 (TTY: 212-504-4115) or visit NYC Emergency Management’s Cooling Center Finder at www.nyc.gov/beattheheat to find the nearest cooling center locations – including accessible facilities – and hours of operation. Cooling centers are air-conditioned facilities, such as libraries, community centers, senior centers and NYCHA facilities that are open to the public during heat emergencies.

The New York City Emergency Management Department and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene also remind New Yorkers to take steps to protect themselves during the extended period of extreme heat. The National Weather Service has issued a Heat Advisory in effect from 12:00 PM through 8:00 PM today. Additionally, an Air Quality Alert is in effect today until 11:00 PM, signaling that people with respiratory problems should reduce their time outdoors.

“The extended period of hot weather continues to be dangerous for all New Yorkers, especially seniors and people with chronic medical conditions,” said **New York City Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito**. “Stay indoors when you can, use air conditioning or visit a cooling center, and drink lots of water.”

The New York City Emergency Management Department also alerts New Yorkers of the potential for severe weather this evening. The National Weather Service has issued a Severe Thunderstorm Watch in effect until 8:00 PM. According to forecasts, heavy rain and strong winds accompanied by gusts up to 70 mph may impact the NYC area. A total of 0.25 to 0.50 inch of rain is expected with this event, but locally higher amounts are possible. Localized minor urban flooding may occur in low-lying and poor drainage areas, and flash flooding could occur during the periods of heaviest rain.

New Yorkers are encouraged to sign up for Notify NYC, the City’s free emergency notification system. Through Notify NYC, New Yorkers can receive phone calls, text messages, and/or email alerts about traffic and transit disruptions and other emergencies. To sign up for Notify NYC, call 311, visit www.nyc.gov/notifynyc, or follow @NotifyNYC on Twitter.

To stay safe during a storm, New Yorkers should follow the safety tips below.

If you are caught outside:

- Stay away from tall, isolated trees and other tall objects.
- Avoid open areas like fields or parking lots.
- Stay away from water and wet items.
- An automobile can protect you from a lightning strike because the current will flow through the car's metal frame. If you are in a car, do not touch any exposed metal connected to the car.
- If someone is struck by lightning, call 9-1-1.
- Do not walk or drive through flooded streets, the actual depth of the water may not be apparent. Turn around, don't drown!
- Flood water can be contaminated. Avoid contact with sewer water, as it poses a serious health risk.
- Have heightened awareness of cars, particularly when approaching or crossing intersections.
- Never touch or go near down power lines, even if you think they are safe.
- Report any downed power lines and avoid standing in flood water, as it can carry electrical current.

HELPING NEW YORKERS TO BEAT THE HEAT:

- The Department of Homeless Services has issued a Code Red Alert and has enhanced outreach. Single adults can present to any shelter to seek refuge from the heat. Transportation is also available to cooling centers via DHS outreach teams, which are checking on vulnerable, at-risk clients with greater frequency.
- The Department for the Aging has opened senior centers as cooling centers, and home care agencies are on the lookout for clients who may need assistance. Case management agencies are also calling to check on home-bound seniors.
- The Fire Department has hydrant spray caps available for any adult 18 years or older at a fire house upon request.
- NYC Water-on-the-Go fountains are available across all five boroughs. Schedules can be found [here](#).
- An Excavation Safety Alert has been issued through Thursday, July 28, at 7:00 PM. Contractors are strongly encouraged to implement enhanced protective measures before digging.

NYC Emergency Management continues to monitor the weather and encourages New Yorkers to take the following steps to beat the heat throughout the summer months:

CHECK ON THOSE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TO THE HEAT:

- A small but crucial gesture can help ensure that we all have a safe and healthy summer: Get to know your neighbors, and contact neighbors and relatives – in person or by phone – at least twice a day during heat waves.
- Pay special attention to the elderly, the very young and anyone with a pre-existing medical condition. New Yorkers should check in on older neighbors who may be isolated from friends and family.
- Air conditioning is the best way to keep cool when it is hot outside, but some people do not have an air conditioner or do not turn it on when they need it. Encourage them to use air conditioning. Help them get to an air-conditioned place if they cannot stay cool at home. Make sure they are drinking enough water.

ADDITIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY TIPS FOR PROTECTION AGAINST THE HEAT:

- Stay out of the sun and avoid extreme temperature changes.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- Drink fluids, particularly water, even if you do not feel thirsty. Your body needs water to keep cool. Those on fluid-restricted diets or taking diuretics should first consult their physician.
- Water is the safest liquid to drink during heat emergencies. Avoid beverages containing alcohol and/or caffeine.
- Eat small, frequent meals.
- Avoid strenuous activity, especially during the sun's peak hours: 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM. If you must do strenuous activity, do it during the coolest part of the day, which is usually in the morning between 4:00 AM and 7:00 AM.
- If possible, go to an air-conditioned building for several hours during the hottest parts of the day.
- Cool down with a cool bath or shower.
- Participate in activities that will keep you cool, such as going to the movies, shopping at a mall, or swimming at a pool or beach.
- Cover all exposed skin with an SPF sunscreen (15 or above) and wear a wide-brimmed hat to protect your face and head.
- Never leave your children or pets in the car.

Know the warning signs of heat stress. If you or someone you know feels weak or faint, go to a cool place and drink water. If there is no improvement, call a doctor or 911.

Call 911 immediately if you have, or someone you know has:

- Hot dry skin OR cold clammy skin
- Trouble breathing
- Rapid heartbeat
- Confusion, disorientation, or dizziness
- Nausea and vomiting

KEEPING YOUR PETS SAFE

- **Avoid dehydration:** Pets can dehydrate quickly, so give them plenty of fresh, clean water.
- **Exercise early and late:** When the temperature is very high, don't let your dog linger on hot asphalt. Your pet's body can heat up quickly, and sensitive paw pads can burn.
- **Know when your pet is in danger:** Symptoms of overheating in pets include excessive panting or difficulty breathing, increased heart and respiratory rate, drooling, mild weakness, stupor, or even collapse. Animals with flat faces like Pugs and Persian cats are more susceptible to heat stroke since they cannot pant as effectively. They should be kept cool in air-conditioned rooms as much as possible.
- **Never leave a pet inside of a parked car on a hot day.** Even with the windows open, extreme temperatures inside a parked car could quickly lead to fatal heat stroke for your pet.
- **Keep cats safe by installing screens in your windows.** Unscreened windows pose a real danger to cats, as they may fall out of open windows during summer months.
- **Prepare with your pet:** Pet food, water, medications and supplies should always be included in your emergency preparedness plans and "go bags."

For more information on coping with the heat, visit: www.nyc.gov/beattheheat or view NYC Emergency Management's *Beat the Heat* video [here](#). The video is also available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

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