

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****#35-18****NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE URGE NEW YORKERS TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS DURING PROLONGED PERIODS OF EXTREME HEAT**

*Cooling centers will open across the city Friday 6/29 through Monday 7/2. To find the nearest cooling center call 311 or visit [www.nyc.gov/beattheheat](http://www.nyc.gov/beattheheat) beginning 8 a.m. Friday*

*People who do not have or use air conditioning and are older, have chronic medical or psychiatric conditions, misuse drugs or alcohol, or take certain medications are at increased risk from extreme heat*

*Parks department will extend daily NYC pool hours to 8 p.m. beginning Friday 6/29 through Sunday 7/1 for Olympic and Intermediate pools*

**June 28, 2018** — With a prolonged period of heat and humidity forecast for New York City this weekend and early next week, the New York City Emergency Management Department and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene are urging New Yorkers to take steps to beat the heat. According to the latest National Weather Service forecast, the New York City area will experience consecutive days of temperatures in the lower to mid-90s with heat indices in the mid to upper 90s. Sunday appears to be the hottest day, with high temperatures in the mid to upper 90s and heat indices in excess of 100 degrees.

To help New Yorkers beat the heat, New York City will open cooling centers throughout the five boroughs beginning on Friday, June 29, through Monday, July 2. 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. To find a cooling center, including accessible facilities closest to you, call 311 (212-639-9675 for Video Relay Service, or TTY: 212-504-4115) or visit the NYC Cooling Center Finder at [www.nyc.gov/beattheheat](http://www.nyc.gov/beattheheat) beginning 8 a.m. Friday.

“Stay cool and stay hydrated during the extreme heat we’re expecting in the coming days,” said **New York City Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito**. “You can also help others to beat the heat by checking on your neighbors, especially if they are seniors, young children, and people with disabilities and access and functional needs.”

“Hot weather can be dangerous for certain New Yorkers – such as those who do not have air conditioning and are older, have chronic health conditions or misuse drugs or alcohol,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Mary T. Bassett**. “Air conditioning is crucial. We urge New Yorkers without air conditioning in their home to go to an air-conditioned place, such as a New York City cooling center.”

Extreme heat is defined by temperatures that hover 10 degrees or more above the average high temperature for the region, last for prolonged periods, and are accompanied by high humidity. The New York City Emergency Management Department urges New Yorkers to take steps to protect themselves and help others who may be at increased risk from the heat. Those at increased risk are people who do not have or use air conditioning AND:

- Are 65 years or older;
- Have chronic medical, mental health, or cognitive/developmental conditions;
- Take certain medications, which can disrupt the regulation of body temperature;
- Are confined to their beds, have limited mobility, or are unable to leave their homes;
- Are obese; or
- Misuse alcohol or drugs.

**CHECK ON THOSE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TO THE HEAT:**

- In New York City, most heat-related deaths occur after exposure to heat in homes without air conditioners. Air conditioning is the best way to stay safe and healthy when it is hot outside. Encourage at-risk New Yorkers to use air conditioning. Help them get to an air-conditioned place, even if for a few hours, if they cannot stay cool at home. Make sure they are drinking plenty of water.
- If at-risk family, friends and neighbors do not have air conditioners, encourage them to find out whether they qualify for a free one through the New York State Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) by calling the Human Resources Administration at 1-800-692-0557 or 311.
- Get to know your neighbors. During extreme heat, call or visit at-risk neighbors, friends and family, such as older adults-and anyone with a pre-existing medical condition. This small but crucial gesture can help ensure that we all have a safe and healthy summer.
- During extreme heat, the Department of Social Services (DSS) issues a Code Red Alert, initiating enhanced outreach efforts. During Code Red periods, shelter is available system-wide to accommodate anyone who is reasonably believed to be homeless. Homeless individuals experiencing heat-related discomfort are also able to access the designated cooling area at any shelter; and transportation to cooling centers is available via DSS outreach teams, who are out 24/7/365, checking on and engaging vulnerable clients with greater frequency.
- During extreme heat, the Department for the Aging opens senior centers as cooling centers.
- The Parks department is extending general swim hours to 8 p.m. at all outdoor Olympic and Intermediate pools beginning Friday 6/29 through Sunday 7/1. City beaches are open and will operate on a normal schedule from 10 a.m. through 6 p.m. Parks has more than 600 spray showers, which will remain available until sundown, or later if actively in use by the public. Free SPF 30 sunscreen is available at all City pools and beaches.

**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 a.m. to 4 p.m. If you must do strenuous activity, do it during the coolest part of the day, which is usually in the morning between 4 a.m. and 7 a.m.
- If possible, go to an air-conditioned location 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.

For more information, visit [www.nyc.gov/health](http://www.nyc.gov/health).

### **FACTS ABOUT HEAT ILLNESS:**

Heat illness is serious. Prolonged exposure to the heat can be harmful and potentially fatal. The added stress caused by heat can also aggravate heart or lung disease even without symptoms of heat illness.

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.
- Trouble breathing.
- Rapid heartbeat.
- Confusion, disorientation, or dizziness.
- Nausea and vomiting.

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**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.
- **Keep cats safe by installing screens in your windows:** Unscreened windows pose a real danger to cats, as they can fall out of them often during summer months.

**IMPROPER FIRE HYDRANT USE:**

The improper opening of fire hydrants wastes 1,000 gallons of water per minute, causes flooding on city streets, and can lower water pressure to dangerous levels and hamper the ability of FDNY to fight fire safely and quickly.

Properly used "spray caps" reduce hydrant output to a safe 25 gallons per minute while still providing relief from the heat. To obtain a spray cap, an adult 18 years or older with proper identification can go to his or her local firehouse and request one.

**ENERGY-SAVING TIPS:**

During periods of intense electrical usage, such as on hot, humid days, it is important to conserve energy as much as possible to avoid brownouts and other electrical disruptions. While diminishing your power usage may seem like an inconvenience, your cooperation will help to ensure that utilities are able to continue to provide uninterrupted electrical service to you and your neighbors, particularly those who are vulnerable to heat-related illness and death:

- Set your air conditioner to 78°F or "low".
- Run appliances such as ovens, washing machines, dryers and dishwashers in the early morning or late at night when it is cooler outside to reduce heat and moisture in your home.
- Close doors to keep cool air in and hot air out when the air conditioner is running.
- Keep shades, blinds, and curtains closed. About 40 percent of unwanted heat comes through windows.
- Turn off air conditioners, lights, and other appliances when not at home and use a timer or smart technology to turn on your air conditioner about a half-hour before arriving home.
- Keep air conditioner filters clean.
- If you run a business, keep your door closed while the air conditioner is running.



## NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

nyc.gov/emergencymanagement

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For more information, visit [nyc.gov/beattheheat](http://nyc.gov/beattheheat). New Yorkers are encouraged to sign up for Notify NYC, the City's free emergency communications program. To sign up for Notify NYC, download the [free mobile application](#), visit [nyc.gov/NotifyNYC](http://nyc.gov/NotifyNYC), call 311, or follow @NotifyNYC on Twitter.

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