

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#67-19

**NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT ADVISE
NEW YORKERS TO BEAT THE HEAT**

Heat Advisory in effect for New York City through 8 p.m. Monday

*Cooling centers are open today across the city. To find the nearest location call 311 or visit
[NYC.gov/beattheheat](https://nyc.gov/beattheheat)*

August 19, 2019 — The New York City Emergency Management Department and the Health Department today advised New Yorkers to take precautions to beat the heat. The National Weather Service has issued a Heat Advisory in effect for New York City through 8 p.m. Monday. High heat and humidity are in the forecast, with heat index values in the upper 90s.

“The best ways to beat the heat are to stay cool and hydrated,” **NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Deanne Criswell** said. “Use air conditioning or visit a cooling center or other air-conditioned places, drink lots of water, and stay out of the sun as much as possible.”

“Extreme heat is potentially dangerous but New Yorkers can greatly reduce the risk of heat-related illness by following a few precautions,” **Health Commissioner Dr. Oxiris Barbot** said. “Try to stay near air conditioning, wear light cool clothing, drink lots of water and try to avoid strenuous outdoor activities during the hottest parts of the day. Also, check in on friends, family members and neighbors who are sick, elderly, or disabled and may need assistance in a heat emergency.”

To help New Yorkers beat the heat, New York City cooling centers are open throughout the five boroughs today. Cooling centers are air-conditioned facilities such as libraries, community centers and senior centers 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 [NYC.gov/beattheheat](https://nyc.gov/beattheheat).

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, but some people at risk of heat illness do not have or do not turn on an air conditioner.

The New York City Emergency Management Department and the Health Department urge New Yorkers to take steps to protect themselves and help others who may be at increased risk from the heat. People at risk are those who do not have access to air conditioning and:

- Have chronic medical, mental health, cognitive or developmental conditions.
- Take certain medicines that can affect body temperature.
- Have limited mobility or are unable to leave their homes.

- Are obese.
- Misuse alcohol or drugs.

Some New Yorkers are at greater risk when it is hot than others. Older adults are more likely than younger New Yorkers to have some combination of the risk factors described above. In addition, as people get older, their ability to maintain a safe body temperature declines — resulting in an increased risk for heat-related illness. African Americans are twice as likely to die from heat stroke compared to Whites due in part to social and economic disparities, including access to air conditioning. Certain neighborhoods are also more vulnerable to the health impacts of heat than other neighborhoods; visit the NYC Environment and Health Data portal to learn more about the [Heat Vulnerability Index](#).

HEALTH AND SAFETY TIPS FOR PROTECTION AGAINST THE HEAT:

- Go to an air-conditioned location, even if for a few hours.
- Stay out of the sun and avoid extreme temperature changes.
- 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.
- Remember: drink water, rest, and locate shade if you are working outdoors or if your work is strenuous. Drink water every 15 minutes even if you are not thirsty, rest in the shade, and watch out for others on your team. Your employer is required to provide water, rest, and shade when work is being done during extreme heat.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing when inside without air conditioning or outside.
- 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 speak with their doctor, pharmacist, or other health care provider. Avoid beverages containing alcohol or caffeine.
- Eat small, frequent meals.
- Cool down with a cool bath or shower.
- Never leave pets or children in the vehicle. Temperatures rise quickly even with the windows down and can be deadly. Call 911 if you see a pet or child in a hot vehicle.
- Protect your pets and service animals when extreme heat strikes:
 - Be sure your pets or service animals have access to plenty of food and water.
 - Make sure your pet has plenty of shady places to go when outdoors.
 - Avoid exercising with your pet outside on extremely hot days.
- 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. The best thing anyone can do to stay safe in and around the water is to learn to swim. The NYC Parks Department [has free swimming lessons](#) for kids and adults. Visit [here](#) for more information on pool and water safety.
- Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens and, in apartments where children live, window guards. Window guards can prevent children from falling out of a window and suffering serious injuries or even death. Screens keep mosquitoes that can spread West Nile Virus out of your home and keep cats from falling out of windows.

- Check on your neighbors during a heat wave, especially if they are seniors, young children, and people with disabilities and access and functional needs.

KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS OF HEAT ILLNESS:

Call 911 immediately if you or someone you know has:

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

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.

IMPROPER FIRE HYDRANT USE:

The improper opening of fire hydrants wastes 1,000 gallons of water per minute, causes flooding on city streets, and lowers water pressure to dangerous levels, which hamper the ability of the Fire Department 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 inconvenient, your cooperation will help to ensure that utilities are able to provide uninterrupted electrical service to you and your neighbors, particularly those who use electric powered medical equipment or are at risk of 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.
- Tell your utility provider if you or someone you know depend on medical equipment that requires electricity.

For more information, visit 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, call 311, or follow @NotifyNYC on Twitter.

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MEDIA CONTACT: Omar Bourne [\(718\) 422-4888](tel:7184224888)

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