

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#55-18

**NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT URGE
NEW YORKERS TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS DURING THE PERIOD OF EXTREME
HEAT**

Heat Advisory in effect for New York City Tuesday and Wednesday

Cooling centers will be open across the city Tuesday and Wednesday. To find the nearest location call 311 or visit www.nyc.gov/beattheheat beginning at 8 a.m. Tuesday

August 27, 2018 — The New York City Emergency Management Department and the Health Department today urged New Yorkers to take precautions to beat the heat. The National Weather Service has issued a heat advisory in effect for New York City from 11 a.m. Tuesday through 9 p.m. Wednesday, August 29. High heat and humidity are in the forecast, with temperatures in the mid-90s and heat index values in excess of 100 degrees. A heat advisory is issued when the combination of heat and humidity is expected to make it feel like it is 95 to 99 degrees for two or more consecutive days, or 100 to 104 degrees for any length of time.

To help New Yorkers beat the heat, NYC Emergency Management will open cooling centers on Tuesday and Wednesday. 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 beginning at 8 a.m. on Tuesday.

“Stay cool and hydrated during the extreme heat we’re expecting in the coming days,” said **NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito**. “Use air conditioning or visit a cooling center, drink plenty of water, and avoid strenuous outdoor activity during the periods of intense heat.”

“Extreme heat can cause serious illness and even death,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Mary T. Bassett**. “The Health Department encourages New Yorkers to stay hydrated, to remain in air conditioned spaces and to utilize cooling centers if necessary. It’s also very important that residents check on neighbors and family members who have a greater risk of health illness to ensure that they are healthy and cool.”

The New York City Emergency Management Department and Health Department remind 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.

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.

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.

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, do not 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.

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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