

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#24-20

**NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT ADVISE
NEW YORKERS TO PREPARE FOR EXTREME HEAT**

*Heat Advisory in effect for New York City from noon Sunday, July 19, through 8 p.m. Monday,
July 20*

*Cooling centers are open across the city Sunday and Monday. To find the nearest location call
311 or visit the City's [Cooling Center Finder](#) (Cooling Center Finder website will be active
beginning 8 p.m. Saturday)*

*Attendees must wear face coverings inside all NYC cooling centers and adhere to social
distancing guidelines*

July 18, 2020 — 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 from noon Sunday, July 19 through 8 p.m. Monday, July 20. High heat and humidity are in the forecast, with heat index values in the mid to upper 90s on Sunday and around 100 on Monday.

To help New Yorkers beat the heat, New York City has implemented a number of measures through the Cool It! NYC and Cool Streets initiatives, including:

- More than 230 new cooling and misting sites in parks in heat-burdened neighborhoods
- More than 160 Cooling Centers open throughout the City
- More than 300 hydrants opened with spray caps
- 650 spray showers in city parks
- 16 Cool Streets
- More than 40,000 air conditioners installed for low-income seniors

A citywide map of cooling elements can be found online at [Cool It! NYC](#). To find your nearest cooling center call 311 or visit the City's [Cooling Center Finder](#). [DOT's Open Streets](#) also highlights each Cool Street across the city.

“As the dangers of the hot weather collide with the COVID-19 pandemic, we are implementing a number of measures to ensure New Yorkers can stay cool while still being socially distanced. We encourage everyone who has an air-conditioner at home to use it; if you don't have an AC, we have opened cooling centers for you to seek relief from the heat,” said **NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Deanne Criswell**. “Remember to check on friends, family members and neighbors who are sick, elderly, or people with disabilities who may need assistance during a heat emergency.”

“New Yorkers isolating at home to protect against COVID-19 are also at greater risk of heat-related illness if they do not have or use air conditioning,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Oxiris Barbot**. “We urge all New Yorkers to get relief in air conditioning for at least a few hours a day, wear light cool clothing, drink lots of water and try to avoid strenuous outdoor activities during the hottest parts of the day. Check on friends, neighbors, and loved ones regularly. Making contact will help reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness during this difficult time and help those at risk for heat-related illness and death and COVID-19 stay safe during heat waves.”

“As the first heat emergency of the summer is upon us, now is the perfect time for residents to take advantage of our new Cool It! NYC map, which highlights the closest parks with cooling features in each neighborhood,” said **NYC Parks First Deputy Commissioner Liam Kavanagh**. “In addition to the new cooling map, we are adding new cooling features to parks in neighborhoods most at risk during heat events, making it even easier for New Yorkers to get cool and stay safe from the heat.”

Cooling Centers

As the City continues its response to COVID-19, social distancing guidelines have been implemented to ensure the safety of any New Yorker who visits a cooling center to seek relief from the heat. Face coverings must be worn at all times inside cooling centers, and attendees must adhere to social distancing guidelines of six feet or more. Cooling centers will also operate at limited capacity. Cooling centers located at senior center locations will be reserved for seniors. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, individuals are reminded to stay at home if they are feeling sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.

Cooling center locations have changed from last year. 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 click [here](#). Cooling centers are open Sunday, July 19, and Monday, July 20.

Cool Streets

The City recently unveiled the first set of “Cool Streets” for this summer, announcing expanded cooling options on existing Open Streets in the most heat-burdened parts of New York City. The [Cool It! NYC](#) program prioritizes new cooling options on blocks in vulnerable neighborhoods with the highest tree-based shade and fire hydrants with spray caps. During heat advisories, NYCDEP and FDNY will proactively install spray caps on these streets’ hydrants to ensure every New Yorker living in a heat-burdened community is within 1/4 mile of an outdoor cooling element.

The Cool Streets initiative focuses on Open Streets in areas that rank highest on the [Heat Vulnerability Index](#), which uses social and environmental factors to understand how heat-related health risks vary across NYC neighborhoods. The City is prioritizing its cooling efforts on HVI 4 and 5 zones, the most heat burdened communities, to serve vulnerable residents during extreme heat events.

Cooling Elements, Spray Showers, & Cool It! NYC Map

The New York City Parks Department will open outdoor cooling options to help individuals beat the heat. New Yorkers can find relief from the heat in spray showers and sprinklers in city parks, drinking fountains across the city, NYC beaches, and tree-based covered areas where temperatures can be up to 20 degrees cooler.

Parks has also identified locations within HVI 4 or 5 zones where new outdoor cooling elements can be added to parks during extreme heat events to create “community oases.” These elements will consist of Parks hydrants and other plumbing fixtures that can be adapted to function as spray showers and misting features. By utilizing the map, visitors will be able to find up-to-date information on the closest sprinklers and water fountains in their neighborhood, and with the *Leafiest Blocks* and *Park Tree Canopy* categories, easily find Parks’ recommendations for blocks and areas with the most shade to help stay cool this summer. Visit [Cool It! NYC](#) for more information.

Code Red

During extreme heat, the Department of Social Services (DSS) issues a Code Red Alert. During Code Reds, shelter is available to anyone experiencing homelessness, where those experiencing heat-related discomfort are also able to access a designated cooling area. Transportation to cooling centers is available via DSS outreach teams who engage with potentially homeless individuals every day of the year and intensify engagement during extreme heat.

Heat-related Illness

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. For more information, including heat-related health tips and warning signs of heat illness, visit [NYC.gov/health](#) or [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.

-30-

MEDIA CONTACT: Omar Bourne/Tashawn Brown
(718) 422-4888 / Press@oem.nyc.gov

STAY CONNECTED: Twitter: @NotifyNYC (emergency notifications)
@nycemergencygmt (emergency preparedness info)