

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#68-19

**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. Thursday, 8/22

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

August 21, 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. Thursday, August 22. High heat and humidity are in the forecast, with heat index values in the mid-90s.

According to the latest National Weather Service forecast, there is also a threat of thunderstorms this afternoon, with some storms possibly becoming severe. Heavy rainfall and damaging winds are possible. New Yorkers are asked to monitor weather forecasts and plan for possible afternoon storms.

“With another round of high heat and humidity today and tomorrow, we want to share some tips to help New Yorkers beat the heat. Use air conditioning to stay cool or visit a cooling center or air-conditioned places, drink lots of water, wear light clothing, and avoid strenuous activities during the hottest part of the day,” **NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Deanne Criswell** said. “We are also monitoring the possibility of thunderstorms this afternoon. Continue to check the forecast and plan accordingly. You can stay informed by following @NotifyNYC on Twitter or visiting [NYC.gov/NotifyNYC](https://nyc.gov/NotifyNYC).”

“In this kind of heat we have to look out for ourselves and others,” **Health Commissioner Dr. Oxiris Barbot** said. “Stay near air conditioning, wear light clothing and check on your family, friends, and neighbors who may be at risk of heat-related illness. Following a few simple precautions can make a big difference.”

To help New Yorkers beat the heat, New York City cooling centers are open throughout the five boroughs today and tomorrow. 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.

Thunderstorm Safety Tips:

If you are caught outside:

- Do not walk, drive or bike through flooded streets; the actual depth of the water may not be apparent. Turn around, do not drown!
- Stay away from tall, isolated trees and other tall objects.
- Avoid open areas like fields or parking lots.

If you are indoors:

- Wait 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder before venturing back outside.
- Charge cell phone batteries, gather supplies, and turn refrigerators and freezers to a colder setting.
- If you are affected by a power outage, turn off all appliances and keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed to prevent food spoilage.
- Do not use generators indoors. If you lose power and have a disability or access needs, or use Life Sustaining Equipment (LSE) and need immediate assistance, please dial 911.

For additional tips, visit NYC.gov/SevereWeather. 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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