



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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NEW YORK CITY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT URGES NEW YORKERS TO CONSERVE ENERGY DURING HEAT WAVE

NYC Cooling Centers Remain Open Until Further Notice

The New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM) reminds New Yorkers to conserve energy as the current heat wave continues. Temperatures are expected to remain in the 90s through the weekend, with heat indices reaching between 100 and 105 today and the mid-90s for the rest of the week.

Conserve Energy:

During periods of extremely hot and humid weather, electricity use rises, which can cause power disruptions. To help prevent power outages and further strain on the city's electrical system, New Yorkers should heed the following tips:

- Don't set your air conditioner thermostat lower than 78 degrees.
- Use air conditioners only when you're home, and only in rooms you're using. If you want to cool your home before you return, set a timer that turns on no more than 30 minutes before you arrive.
- Turn off nonessential appliances, such as dishwashers, washers, and dryers.

Cooling Centers:

Cooling centers will remain open to help provide relief from the heat to New Yorkers until further notice. Cooling centers are public places, such as Department for the Aging (DFTA) senior centers, New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) and Salvation Army community centers, and public libraries, where air conditioning is available. To find the cooling center closest to you, call 311 (TTY: 212-504-4115) or visit www.nyc.gov/oem.

Spray Caps & Fire Hydrants:

Opening fire hydrants without spray caps is illegal, wasteful and dangerous. Illegally opened hydrants can lower water pressure, which can cause problems at hospitals and other medical facilities and hinder fire-fighting by reducing the flow of water to hoses and pumps. The powerful force of an open hydrant without a spray cap can also knock a child down, causing serious injury. Call 311 to report an open hydrant.

Hydrants can be opened legally if equipped with a City-approved spray cap. One illegally opened hydrant can release more than 1,000 gallons of water per minute, while a hydrant with a

spray cap releases around 20 to 25 gallons per minute. Spray caps can be obtained by someone 18 or over, free of charge, at local firehouses.

Health Tips:

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. Call your doctor or go to the emergency room right away if you have these symptoms:

- Hot, dry skin or cold, clammy skin
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- Confusion, hallucinations, disorientation

The risk for getting sick during a heat wave is increased for people who:

- Are younger than five, or older than 64
- Have chronic medical or mental health conditions
- Take medications, which can disrupt the regulation of body temperature
- Are confined to their beds or unable to leave their homes
- Are overweight

If you have a medical condition or take medications, check with your physician about precautions during hot weather. Family, friends, and neighbors who are at high risk will need extra help during this period of extreme heat. Think about how you can help someone you know get to an air-conditioned place.

Ready New York - Beat the Heat Tips:

- Use an air conditioner if you have one.
- If you do not have an air conditioner, go to a cooler place such as an air-conditioned store, mall, museum or movie theater. Or, visit a cooling center.
- Use a fan if the air is not too hot. Fans work best at night to bring in cooler air from outside. Use a fan only when the air conditioner is on or the windows are open.
- Drink plenty of water or other fluids, even if you don't feel thirsty. Avoid beverages containing alcohol, caffeine, or high amounts of sugar.
- If possible, stay out of the sun. When you're in the sun, wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing that covers as much of your skin as possible, wear a hat to protect your face and head, and use sunscreen (at least SPF 15) to protect exposed skin.
- Never leave children, pets, or those who require special care in a parked car.
- Avoid strenuous activity, or plan it for the coolest part of the day, usually in the morning between 4 AM and 7 AM.
- Be careful if you take a cold shower to stay cool – sudden temperature changes can make you feel dizzy or sick.

For more information on coping with extreme heat, see the *Ready New York: Beat the Heat* guide at www.nyc.gov/oem. For more information on the health effects associated with extreme heat visit www.nyc.gov/health.

CONTACT: Chris Gilbride/ Seth Andrews (OEM)

(718) 422-4888