

A MESSAGE FROM MAYOR MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG



During the summer months, New Yorkers are especially vulnerable to the hazards created by hot weather. The asphalt, concrete, and metal that make up the City absorb a tremendous amount of heat, causing New York to be as much as 20 degrees hotter than its surrounding areas. This brochure will help you to prepare for the hot weather. Please read the following information and share it with your family and friends.

PLANNING AHEAD

In the event of a forecasted heat wave, preparation is essential. Have a supply of water or juice on hand to prevent dehydration, as well as ample sunscreen to protect your skin against the sun's harmful rays. If necessary, identify an air-conditioned location, such as a shopping mall, library, home of a friend or relative, or a New York City "Cooling Center," where you can find relief from the heat. Monitor weather conditions by listening to the radio, watching TV and keeping in touch with your community organizations.

Make a special effort to check on your neighbors during a heat wave, especially if they are elderly, have young children, or are otherwise vulnerable to the extreme heat.

HOME PREPARATION

Help your home stay cool by installing window shades or awnings to block the sun. If you have an air conditioner, make sure that it works properly before the summer begins. If you don't have air conditioning, keep your windows open so that fresh air may flow through your home.

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COOLING CENTERS

New York City monitors the weather carefully. When the heat index (a measurement of temperature and humidity) is predicted to be dangerously high, the City will open Cooling Centers in air-conditioned facilities, including community and senior centers, for members of the public who are seeking relief from the heat. During a heat wave, information on nearby cooling centers and tips on how to protect yourself against the heat can be found on the City's website at www.nyc.gov.

ONLY during a heat emergency, you may also call the City's **"Beat The Heat" Hotline** at **800-4-COOL-NY (800-426-6569)**. TTY callers may use Relay.

HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES

Prolonged exposure to the heat can be harmful and even potentially fatal. The following is a list of heat-related illnesses and suggestions for treatment:

HEAT EXHAUSTION

SYMPTOMS: Mild form of shock marked by heavy sweating, weakness, headache, weak pulse, dizziness, exhaustion, fainting, nausea or vomiting, and cold, clammy skin. Body temperature will seem normal.

TREATMENT: Call 911 for medical attention. If heat exhaustion is not treated it can worsen and lead to heat stroke. Remove the victim to a cool place. Loosen clothing and apply cool, wet cloths to the neck, face and arms. If the victim is conscious, have him or her drink water slowly, unless nausea occurs. Give him or her half a glass of water every 15 minutes. *Under no circumstances should an unconscious person be given anything to drink by mouth.* Watch carefully for changes in his or her condition.

HEAT STROKE (SUNSTROKE)

SYMPTOMS: Hot, red skin; rapid, weak pulse; rapid, shallow breathing; loss of ability to sweat; throbbing headache, dizziness, nausea, confusion and unconsciousness. Body temperature can be so high (103° F or higher, though a person may feel chilled) that brain damage or death may result in fewer than 10 minutes if medical attention is not immediate.

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TREATMENT: Immediately call 911 for medical help. Bring the victim to a cool place. Remove the victim's clothes and cool his or her body by wrapping it in wet sheets and fanning them. Watch for signs of breathing problems. Keep the victim lying down and as cool as possible. Do NOT give the victim any fluids.

WATER CONSERVATION

Water use often rises to unusually high levels during periods of hot weather, causing fluctuations in water pressure around the City. This, in addition to a drought emergency, makes water conservation extremely important. Follow these tips below:

- Repair leaky faucets; turn taps off tightly.
- Take short showers; only fill bathtubs halfway when taking a bath.
- Run dishwasher and washing machines only when they are full.
- Do not let water run while washing dishes, shaving or brushing your teeth.
- Observe restrictions on watering your lawn or plants.

When New York City is in a drought emergency, it is important that you adhere to restrictions set forth by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in order to conserve water during the summer months.

SPRAY CAPS AND FIRE HYDRANTS

Opening fire hydrants without spray caps is wasteful and dangerous. High water pressure can push children and others into oncoming traffic or cause others to lose their balance, resulting in injury.

An open hydrant wastes 1,000 gallons of water per minute, and causes flooding on City streets. It also places the lives of citizens and firefighters in jeopardy by lowering water pressure to dangerous levels and hampering the ability to fight fire safely and quickly.

To report illegally opened hydrants or other water or sewer complaints, please call the **DEP's 24-hour hotline at 718-DEP-HELP (718-337-4357)**. You can also log on to www.nyc.gov/dep for more info.

www.nyc.gov/oem

CONSERVING ENERGY

During periods of extremely hot and humid weather, regional electric usage rises to extremely high levels. Conserving energy is important to prevent brownouts or blackouts and other electrical reduction problems.

Tips on conserving energy:

- Set your air conditioner thermostat at no less than 78 degrees.
- Use the air conditioner only when you are home. If you want to cool your home before you return, use a timer to have it start no more than a half-hour before you arrive.
- Keep non-essential appliances turned off.

POWER OUTAGES

To prepare for possible power outages and disruptions, keep these items in an easy-to-locate place: flashlight, battery-powered radio, first aid kit, bottled water, and extra batteries. If you do experience power problems, keep the windows open to ensure proper ventilation. You may also call **ConEd** at **800-752-6633**, or **KeySpan Energy** at **800-490-0025**.

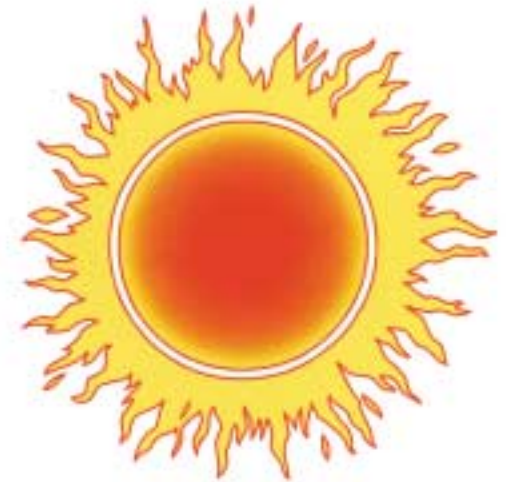
OZONE-POLLUTED AIR

The ozone layer occurs naturally in the upper atmosphere surrounding the Earth: it serves as a filter for the damaging ultraviolet light emitted by the sun. Ozone forms in the lower atmosphere in hot weather and at ground level is a pollutant that can be harmful. Inhaling it may cause chest pain, coughing, nausea and throat irritation. It may also worsen bronchitis, heart disease, emphysema and asthma. People who spend time outdoors in the summer, particularly children, the elderly, exercisers and outdoor workers are most at risk. Those persons with respiratory difficulties such as asthma need to be aware of these dangers and heed ozone warnings and alerts.

“BEAT THE HEAT” TIPS

- Stay out of the sun—avoid extreme temperature changes.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Light colors reflect some of the sun’s energy.
- Drink fluids—particularly water—even if you do not feel thirsty. Your body needs water to keep cool.*
- Water is the safest liquid to drink during heat emergencies. Avoid beverages containing alcohol and/or caffeine.
- Eat small, frequent meals.
- Avoid using salt tablets unless directed to do so by a physician.
- 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 building for several hours during the hottest parts of the day. New York City operates **Cooling Centers** around the five boroughs. To find the one nearest you, call **(800) 4-COOL-NY**. TTY callers may use Relay.
- Cool down with repeated cool baths or showers. Never take a shower immediately after becoming overheated—you may cool down too quickly and become ill, nauseous or dizzy.
- 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 a high SPF sunscreen; wear a wide-brimmed hat to protect your face and head.
- Never leave your children or pets in the car.

**Those on fluid-restricted diets or taking diuretics should first consult their physician.*



BEAT the HEAT

*The New York City Guide
to Preparing for
Hot Weather*

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
CITY OF NEW YORK

Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor

John T. Odermatt
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**this information available online @
www.nyc.gov/oem**