

CITY OF BALTIMORE

SHEILA DIXON, Mayor



HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Baltimore City Issues Code Red Heat Alert

Baltimore, MD (August 9, 2009) – Because of predicted high temperatures and potential danger according to the Baltimore Heat Watch Warning System, Interim Health Commissioner Olivia D. Farrow is declaring Sunday, August, 9 through Tuesday, August 11, Code Red Heat Alert Days. Baltimore City will open emergency cooling centers. Each center will have cool air, water, and ice available.

The Housing Department will operate six centers around the city. These centers will be open from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Sunday, and 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday:

- Northern Community Action Center -- 5225 York Road
- Southern Community Action Center -- 606 Cherry Hill Road (inside the shopping center 2nd floor)
- Northwest Community Action Center -- 3314 Ayrdale Avenue
- Western Community Action Center -- 1133 Pennsylvania Avenue
- Southeastern Community Action Center -- 3411 Bank Street
- Eastern Community Action Center – 1400 E. Federal Street

The Commission on Aging and Retirement Education will operate five additional cooling centers. These centers will open from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. each day:

- Waxter Center -- 1000 Cathedral Street
- Oliver Center -- 1700 Gay Street
- Sandtown-Winchester Center -- 1601 Baker Street
- Hatton Center -- 2825 Fait Avenue
- John Booth -- 229 1/2 S. Eaton Street

In addition, residents can go to Recreation and Parks Centers throughout the city for relief from the heat.

During periods of extreme heat, the Baltimore City Health Department recommends that city residents:

- Drink plenty of water or juice
- Avoid alcohol and caffeine
- Wipe skin with cool water as needed
- Reduce outside activities
- Wear light weight and light-colored clothing
- Stay inside during the hottest time of day
- Watch out for signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke:
 - Confusion
 - Nausea
 - Light-headedness
 - High body temperature with cool and clammy skin
 - Seek medical help immediately if any of these symptoms occur
 - Seek relief from the heat in air-conditioned locations
 - Check on older, sick, or frail people in your community who may need help responding to the heat

New this year, the city is providing free transportation to help vulnerable residents get to a cool place and visit friends and family for support, or take other steps to beat the heat. The city is distributing special MTA bus passes good for one free trip on Code Red Heat Alert days.

Individuals can obtain a pass at emergency departments, social service agencies, churches, cooling centers, and other venues. In addition, city residents concerned about their neighbors can request passes to distribute from their local fire station. Medic units will also distribute passes as they travel around the city.

City residents who want information on the cooling centers and free bus passes can call 311, the city service line. Any city resident experiencing the signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke should call 911.

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