

CITY OF BALTIMORE
MAYOR STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE



HEALTH DEPARTMENT
Olivia D. Farrow, Esq., R.S.
Interim Commissioner
1001 E. Fayette Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT: Brian Schleiter
PHONE: 443-984-2623
Mediahealth@baltimorecity.gov

Baltimore City Implements Additional Code Red Heat Alert Strategies

BALTIMORE, MD (July 6, 2010) -- Due to the forecasted high temperatures and heat indices for the week of July 5th, the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management and the Baltimore City Health Department are implementing additional Code Red Heat Alert responses to help Baltimore residents stay cool and healthy.

Beginning Wednesday, four city recreation centers will open as additional cooling centers, bringing the total to 15, and [city pool hours will be extended](#). The Baltimore Fire Department is staffing additional medic units throughout the week to handle any increase in heat-related calls. In addition, private homeless shelters have been asked to increase day-time operating hours through Friday, and multiple agencies are collaborating to check in on seniors and other vulnerable groups.

"The City is going to do everything we can to keep people safe, but the easiest way to prevent heat injuries and deaths is for our citizens to watch out for themselves and their neighbors. If you have an elderly person in your neighborhood or an older family member who lives alone, give them a call or stop by to see if they're alright," said Bob Maloney, director of the Office of Emergency Management.

Interim Health Commissioner Olivia D. Farrow has declared Tuesday, July 6, and Wednesday, July 7, Code Red Heat Alert days. Baltimore City emergency cooling centers will open and will have cool air, water and ice available. Residents should call 311 for the latest cooling center hours before heading to the nearest one.

The Community Action Program will operate five centers around the city. The Salvation Army Canteen is serving cold water at these centers, which are open from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday:

- 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 -- 3939 Reisterstown Road
- 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 on Tuesday and Wednesday. These centers will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.:

- 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
- Zeta Center -- 4501 Reisterstown Road

The Department of Parks & Recreation will operate the following four additional cooling centers Wednesday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.:

- Furley -- 4633 Furley Avenue
- Brooklyn-O'Malley -- 3560 Third Street
- Mary E. Rodman -- 3600 W. Mulberry Street
- James McHenry -- Hollins & Poppleton Streets

The Jewish Community Center, a private facility unaffiliated with the City, will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday. It is located at 5700 Park Heights Avenue.

The high temperature in Baltimore City has reached 90 degrees or higher on 24 days already this year, putting Baltimore on pace to record one of the hottest summers on record. To date, there have been six Code Red Heat Alert days in Baltimore City, compared to 3 in 2009. No heat-related deaths have been recorded in Baltimore City through Monday. Through July 5, 992 clients have visited the city's cooling centers, and nearly 1,200 bottles of water have been distributed.

“Temperatures exceeding 100 degrees in Baltimore this early in July are not unprecedented, but there is a danger that some residents will be caught unprepared,” said Interim Commissioner Farrow. “I encourage everyone to check on family, friends, and neighbors, especially the elderly and those who may be most vulnerable to extreme 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 (11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.)
- 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
- Never leave children or pets alone in closed vehicles, even for short periods of time
- Watch out for signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke:
 - o Confusion
 - o Nausea

- o Light-headedness
- o High body temperature with cool and clammy skin
- o Hot, dry, flushed skin
- o Rapid or slowed heart beat
- o Seek medical help immediately if any of these symptoms occur

Citizens are also encouraged to quickly report open fire hydrants, which can deplete a community of drinking water within a matter of hours. Low water pressure can mean no water for many people, especially in high rise buildings and hospitals. More importantly, low water pressure significantly affect the ability of firefighters to extinguish a fire in a building, impacts the efficacy of their operations and increases the chance of getting burned while engaged in firefighting activities.

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

For more information, please visit our Website at www.baltimorehealth.org/coderedinfo.

#