



THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

MAYOR DOMENIC J. SARNO

HOME OF THE BASKETBALL HALL OF FAME

PRESS RELEASE

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COOLING CENTERS TO OPEN IN THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD

July 20, 2011 - Mayor Domenic J. Sarno, the City's Director of the Department of Health and Human Services Helen R. Caulton-Harris, Director of Elder Affairs Jan Rodriguez-Denney and the City's Director of Emergency Preparedness Bob Hassett announced today that the City of Springfield will be opening cooling centers on Thursday, July 21, 2011 through Saturday, July 23, 2011.

The following sites will be open on **Thursday, July 21, 2011**, and **Friday, July 22, 2011**, from **8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

Mason Square Senior Center	- 74 Walnut Street
Riverview Senior Center	- 120 Clyde Street/Division Street
Greenleaf Community Center	- 1188 ½ Parker Street
Pine Point Senior	- 335 Berkshire Avenue
Raymond Sullivan Safety Complex	-1212 Carew Street

The following sites will be open on **Saturday, July 22, 2011**, from **8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

Mason Square Senior Center	- 74 Walnut Street
Riverview Senior Center	- 120 Clyde Street/Division Street
Greenleaf Community Center	- 1188 ½ Parker Street

Heat stress is a serious condition that poses a health threat to many people, particularly the elderly and youth. Heat stress places a strain on the body, and if the strain becomes too great, it can cause serious and permanent damage, even death. Preventive measures should be taken in order to avoid heat stress.

Certain medical conditions and prescription drugs can make you more vulnerable to heat stress. Those who have high blood pressure, diabetes, a weak or damaged heart, infection or fever, diarrhea, problems

with circulation, skin diseases, sunburn, those who are overweight, or who have had a previous stroke are at a greater risk of falling victim to heat stress. In addition, those who take medication for sleeplessness, high blood pressure, nervousness, depression, or poor circulation are also more susceptible to heat stress. If you fall into either of these categories, consult your doctor or pharmacist for advice. Loss of appetite, lack of energy, fainting, and cramps are signs that you are losing the battle against heat. Take the appropriate steps to protect yourself.

Mayor Domenic J. Sarno urges residents to take precautions due to the heat and to following the following guidelines:

What you should do if the weather is extremely hot:

- Stay indoors as much as possible and limit exposure to the sun.
- Stay on the lowest floor out of the sunshine if air conditioning is not available.
- Consider spending the warmest part of the day in public buildings such as libraries, schools, movie theaters, shopping malls, and other community facilities. Circulating air can cool the body by increasing the perspiration rate of evaporation.
- Eat well-balanced, light, and regular meals. Avoid using salt tablets unless directed to do so by a physician.
- Drink plenty of water. Persons who have epilepsy or heart, kidney, or liver disease; are on fluid-restricted diets; or have a problem with fluid retention should consult a doctor before increasing liquid intake.
- Limit intake of alcoholic beverages.
- Dress in loose-fitting, lightweight, and light-colored clothes that cover as much as possible.
- Protect face and head by wearing a wide-brimmed hat.
- Check on family, friends, and neighbors who do not have air conditioning and who spend much of their time alone.
- Never leave children or pets alone in closed vehicles.
- Avoid strenuous work during the warmest part of the day. Use a buddy system when working in extreme heat, and take frequent breaks.

Keep your four legged friends safely and comfortably at home during the extreme heat.

- Never leave an animal in a parked car. Car rides can quickly turn deadly as the inside of a car can reach temperatures in excess of 120 degrees in several minutes.
- Bring outdoor animals into cooler areas of your home. If they must stay outside, ensure they have protection from the sun. A dog house does not provide relief or protection from the heat. Access to plenty of shade and cool, potable water is critical to their wellbeing.
- Limit exercise to hours when the sun is down and take it easy or better yet, wait until the heat wave ends. Pets are prone to heat exhaustion just like people. In addition, hot asphalt can burn their feet.
- Animals are susceptible to sunburn. Be sure any topical sunscreen products you use are labeled for use on animals.

Residents with any questions about locations and hours of cooling shelter operations can call the City's customer service call center at 3-1-1 or (413) 736-3111.

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