



## THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

MAYOR DOMENIC J. SARNO

*HOME OF THE BASKETBALL HALL OF FAME*

### **PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, July 13, 2016

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### **Mayor Sarno, Health Commissioner Helen Caulton-Harris to Open Cooling Centers**

Springfield, MA – Mayor Sarno, along with the Commissioner of Health and Human Services, Helen R. Caulton-Harris, announced today that the City of Springfield will open **Cooling Centers** on **Thursday and Friday, July 14-15, 2016**. The sites are:

<b>Libraries</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Days and Hours</b>
Brightwood	359 Plainfield St.	Thursday, 1pm – 8pm Friday, 9am - 5pm
East Forest Park	122 Island Pond Rd	Thursday, 1pm – 5pm Friday, 10am - 5pm
East Springfield	21 Osborne Terr	Thursday, 1pm – 5pm Friday, 10am - 5pm
Forest Park	380 Belmont Ave.	Thursday, 1pm – 8pm Friday, 1pm - 5pm
Indian Orchard	44 Oak St.	Thursday, 1pm – 5pm Friday, 1pm - 5pm
Library Express at Pine Point	204 Boston Rd.	Friday, 1pm – 5p

Mason Square	765 State Street.	Thursday, 1pm – 8pm Friday, 1pm - 5pm
Sixteen Acres	1187 Parker St.	Thursday, 10am – 5pm Friday, 1pm - 5pm

**Additional Sites:**

Greenleaf Community Center	1187 1/2 Parker St.	Thursday and Friday, 9am - 6pm
Hungry Hill Senior Center	773 Liberty Street	Thursday and Friday, 8am - 4pm

Mayor Sarno states, “It is very important in extreme weather conditions that we afford those in need of assistance, especially our seniors and those dealing with medical challenges, these relief accommodations.”

Heat stress is a serious condition that poses a health threat to many people, particularly the elderly. 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 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.

**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 tables 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 well being.
- 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.

For more information please contact Yaitza Osorio at the Department of Health and Human Services at (413) 886-5018.

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