

GEORGE LATIMER, Westchester County Executive

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WESTCHESTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT ISSUES HEAT ADVISORY
Advises Residents to Drink Water, Cool Off and Never Leave People or Pets in a Closed Car

With high humidity and temperatures forecasted to exceed 95 degrees in Westchester County Tuesday through Thursday, the Westchester County Health Department is issuing a heat advisory. Residents should avoid strenuous activity, drink lots of water, avoid alcohol and caffeine, and take precautions to prevent heat-related illness.

“Pace yourself -- don’t overdo it in the heat,” said County Executive George Latimer. “If you spend a lot of time outdoors, take breaks in an air-conditioned place and drink lots of water. Also, remember to check in on your elderly or ailing neighbors.”

Sherlita Amler, MD, Westchester County Commissioner of Health, said people who are most vulnerable to adverse effects from the heat include the very young, seniors, people who are obese and those with high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes or lung conditions.

“Heat stroke and dehydration can take you by surprise,” Amler said. “High humidity, chronic health conditions and some medications can also increase a person’s risk for heat stroke.”

Heat stroke is a serious and life-threatening condition that claims many lives nationwide each year. Symptoms include hot red, dry skin, shallow breathing, a rapid, weak pulse, and confusion. Anyone suffering from heat stroke needs to receive emergency medical treatment immediately. Call 911 if you suspect heat stroke and immediately cool the overheated person while waiting for emergency help to arrive.

“To avoid tragedy, it’s also vital to never leave infants, children, seniors or pets in a closed car no matter how brief the time,” she said. “Closed vehicles can quickly heat up to a life-threatening 140° F or more.”

Another concern during a heat wave is heat exhaustion. Seniors, children up to age four, people who are overweight or who have high blood pressure and those who work in hot environments are most at risk. Signs include headache, nausea or vomiting, dizziness and exhaustion, as well as cool, moist, pale or flushed skin.

People suffering from heat exhaustion should be moved out of the sun and have cool, wet cloths applied to their skin.

Take these precautions to prevent heat-related illnesses:

- If you exercise or work outdoors during extreme heat, drink lots of water and take frequent breaks.
- Limit strenuous activity from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses, and use a broad spectrum sunscreen of SPF 30 or higher.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol and sugary drinks, which cause you to lose more body fluid.
- Take a cool shower or bath.
- NEVER leave people or pets in a closed, parked vehicle.
- Check on elderly or ill neighbors to make sure they are safe.
- Bring pets inside and be sure to provide them with plenty of water.
- Stay indoors, ideally in an air-conditioned place.
- If your house or apartment isn't air-conditioned, spend a few hours in an air-conditioned shopping mall, public library, movie theater or supermarket. Call ahead to verify the hours of a library or senior center near you where you can cool off. For contact information, go to <http://health.westchestergov.com/stay-safe-in-the-sun>.
- Check with your municipality for the latest availability, hours and locations of cooling centers.
 - For Mount Vernon, go to www.cmvny.com
 - For New Rochelle, go to www.newrochelleny.com
 - For Port Chester, go to www.portchesterny.com
 - For Peekskill, go to www.cityofpeekskill.com
 - For Rye Town, go to www.townofrye.com
 - For Yonkers, go to www.yonkersny.gov/keepcool
 - For Ossining Village, go to www.villageofossining.org

Elevated heat and humidity can also lead to unhealthy levels of ozone, a gas produced by the action of sunlight on organic air contaminants from auto exhaust and other sources. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation forecasts daily ozone conditions at (<http://www.dec.ny.gov>), or call the New York State Air Quality Hotline at 1-800-535-1345.

Significant exposure to ozone has been linked with adverse health effects, such as nose and throat irritation, respiratory symptoms and decreased lung function. People who experience these symptoms should speak with a healthcare provider. Those who may be especially sensitive to the effects of ozone exposure include the very young, those who exercise outdoors or are involved in strenuous outdoor work and those with pre-existing respiratory problems such as asthma. When ozone levels are elevated, the Westchester County Department of Health recommends limiting strenuous physical activity outdoors to reduce the risk of adverse effects.

About Westchester County

Westchester County, located in the heart of the historic Hudson Valley, covers 500 square miles and has a population of just under a million. Originally home to Native Americans, who were members of the Lenape tribe, it is today a rich mix of many cultures and landscapes. The County is a blend of bustling cities, quaint villages and picturesque towns as well as open spaces and a network of beautiful parks. Westchester is made up of 6 cities, 19 towns and 20 villages. Westchester County is known for top-notch public schools, and a high quality of life. The County is also an intellectual capital, boasting a highly educated workforce, competitive

colleges and universities, Fortune 500 companies, world changing non-profits, and cutting-edge research centers. Westchester is led by County Executive George Latimer, who took office in January 2018 as the ninth County Executive. Using inclusion and openness as a foreground, Latimer is fighting to make Westchester a destination for all people to live, work and enjoy. Learn more about Westchester County by visiting www.westchestergov.com

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