



For Immediate Release  
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July 6, 2010

### **TOWN OF STRATFORD TAKES ACTION TO HELP RESIDENTS DEAL WITH EXTREME HEAT CONDITIONS**

**Stratford, Connecticut (July 6, 2010)**—In response to the continued forecast of extreme heat and humidity, the Town of Stratford is reminding residents to stay safe and avoid heat-related conditions. There are several public buildings throughout town that can offer a respite from the heat, even if just for an hour or two. Over-exposure to high temperatures, especially among the elderly, children, and those with chronic illnesses or impaired mobility, can lead to serious heat-related illness. People who work outside for long periods, such as construction workers or landscapers are also at risk.

The Baldwin Center is a comfortable place to stay cool for all ages, not just seniors and is open this evening until 9pm. The Birdseye Complex and Town Hall are also open until 9pm this evening as they have regularly scheduled meetings. Another public facility that offers a respite from the sweltering heat is the Stratford public library—open until 8pm Monday through Thursday as part of its summer hours.

“Even healthy individuals can be impacted by the heat,” says Lisa Pippa, Director of Health. “Understanding how exposure to excessive heat affects the body, knowing the signs and symptoms of serious heat-related illnesses, and taking simple preventive measures,” Pippa continues, “can make the difference between life and death.”

Residents who are seeking more information about personal safety under extreme heat conditions can call the State Info Line at 211 or view fact sheets posted on the Town of Stratford’s website at [www.townofstratford/health](http://www.townofstratford/health).

Below are some warning signs of heat-related illnesses, including heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat rash. Heat stroke is the most serious heat-related illness. When body temperature rises quickly, the sweating mechanism fails, and the body is unable to cool down. It can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not provided.

The warning signs of heat stroke are a body temperature above 105°F, red-spotted, hot, and dry skin without sweating, rapid pulse, confusion, convulsions and loss of consciousness. What to do when someone is having symptoms of heat stroke:

- Call 9-1-1 immediately.
- Get the victim in a shady or air-conditioned location.
- Cool the victim using cool water bath or cool wet sponge, and fan.
- Do NOT let the victim drink alcohol.
- Monitor body temperature.
- If medical assistance is delayed call the emergency room for further instruction.

Heat exhaustion is due to the body losing too much fluid, salt or both. The warning signs of heat exhaustion are dizziness, fatigue, weakness, headache, and vomiting. Fortunately, heat exhaustion is not life threatening, and will resolve with a few simple steps:

- Have the victim drink sips of cool (not cold) water, or electrolyte-containing beverages, every 15 minutes for one hour. Avoid caffeinated or alcoholic beverages.
- Have the victim rest in a cool, shady place.
- Cool shower, bath, or sponge bath to cool the body.
- Never give salt tablets to someone with symptoms of heat exhaustion.
- If symptoms of heat stroke begin, or the victim has heart problems or high blood pressure, seek medical attention immediately.

When the body is overheated it cannot evaporate sweat as quickly, thus inhibiting the process of cooling down. Conditions that can limit the body's ability

to regulate temperature include old age, obesity, fever, dehydration, heart disease, poor circulation, sunburn, and drug and alcohol use.

Children should not be exposed to excessive heat for long periods of time since they are unable to perspire as much as adults and therefore are more prone to heat-related illnesses, especially during exercise. Even if children are swimming in a pool or beach, high humidity and the sun's rays are a potential threat. And don't forget about pets, they need to be protected against the extreme heat as well!

Protect yourself and your family by drinking two to four glasses of cool, nonalcoholic beverages each hour, and wearing light colored, loose fitted clothing. Discontinue all activity and find a cool place if someone feels lightheaded, confused, weak or faint. Save outdoor activities for the evening if possible. Additional measures are:

- Avoid hot foods and heavy meals – they add heat to your body.
- Never leave infants, children or pets in a parked car, even for a short period.
- Dress infants in cool, loose clothing and monitor fluid intake.
- Stay indoors in an air-conditioned place during the middle of the day if possible.
- Take a cool shower.
- Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing.
- Check on elderly neighbors or relatives, or anyone who is physically ill.

For more information about the various town buildings' hours, contact the Mayor's Office at 203-385-4001.

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