



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie Urges: Check Neighbors and Pets in Extreme Heat

PATTY RITCHIE July 20, 2011

| ISSUE: **AGING, SENIOR CENTERS, SENIORS**

State Senator Patty Ritchie is urging Central and Northern New Yorkers to check frequently on the elderly and those who live alone, as well as to take extra care with family pets, to protect them from soaring temperatures in what is already being called one of the worst heat waves in years.

The National Weather Service has issued Excessive Heat Watch alerts for Oswego and Jefferson Counties through Thursday, as temperatures soar and remain in the 90s. Heat is the number one, weather-related cause of death in the US, claiming more lives each year than floods, lightning, tornadoes and hurricanes combined, they said.

“While we are all doing what we can to find relief for ourselves from the current heat wave, I am urging residents also to think about elderly neighbors, those who live alone, people with special needs, and helpless pets who are also suffering from heat and, in many cases, may be even more vulnerable to its effects,” Senator Ritchie said.

Senator Ritchie said neighbors should call on the elderly at least once a day, and consider taking vulnerable persons for relief to places with air conditioning, such as stores, public libraries, museums and movie theaters, among others. Pets should be given adequate shade, food and water, and exercise should be limited.

She also urged New Yorkers to be aware of the signs of heat-related illness, and call for emergency assistance for people displaying the effects of overheating, including hot, red and dry skin; rapid or weak pulse, shallow breathing, dizziness, nausea, headache and exhaustion.

The state Office of Emergency has issued tips for beating the heat and preventing illness:

- Limit strenuous activity and exercise, especially during the sun's peak between 11 AM and 4 PM
- Eat less protein and more fruits and vegetables. Eat small meals, but eat more often. Do not eat salty foods.
- Drink at least two to four glasses of water per hour during extreme heat, even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid beverages containing alcohol or caffeine.
- If possible, stay out of the sun and stay in air conditioning. If you must go outdoors, wear sunscreen.
- Make sure there is enough water and food for pets and limit their exercise.

The complete list of tips from OEM is available at: <http://readme.readmedia.com/State-OEM-Offers-Safety-Tips-to-Beat-the-Heat/2860978>