



News from the Office of  
**ERIE COUNTY EXECUTIVE MARK POLONCARZ**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **Health Commissioner Dr. Gale Burstein**

**July 18, 2013**

**CONTACT:** Peter Anderson / Peter.Anderson@erie.gov  
Phone: (716)858-8500 / Mobile: (716) 270-7842

### **BEAT THE HEAT: BURSTEIN ADVISES PRECAUTIONS AS HEAT WAVE HOLDS**

*Health Commissioner Advocates Measures to Stay Hydrated, Avoid Activity in Heat*

**ERIE COUNTY, NY**— With most of the U.S. enduring the hottest temperatures seen this year, and with temperatures in Erie County reaching into the upper 80's with high humidity, Health Commissioner Dr. Gale Burstein is advising residents to find ways to stay cool and hydrated while waiting for cooler weather to arrive.

"It is easy to underestimate how seriously heat can affect people, and it's important to remember that heat's effects can suddenly overtake an individual," **said Burstein**. "During these days of higher than normal temperatures, all people need to do their best to keep their body temperature cool. Stay in air-conditioned spaces as much as possible, or find one if your home or apartment is not air-conditioned. Don't rely on a fan to be your cooling device. Take cool showers or baths as needed. Drink more water than usual, and don't wait until you are thirsty to do it. Avoid alcohol and sugary drinks, and remind others to do the same."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") is also recommending that residents be aware of the signs of **heat exhaustion** (heavy sweating; weakness; cold, pale, clammy skin; fast, weak pulse; nausea or vomiting; and fainting) and **heat stroke** (high body temperature, above 103 degrees; hot, red, dry or moist skin; rapid and strong pulse; and possible unconsciousness). In cases of heat exhaustion, move to a cooler location, lie down and loosen clothing, sip water, and apply cool, wet cloths to as much of the body as possible. In cases of heat stroke, call 911 immediately. Heat stroke is a medical emergency requiring immediate attention. Move the person to a cooler environment, reduce the person's body temperature with cool cloths or a cool bath, and do NOT give fluids.

**Burstein continued**, "People should also remember that the elderly, those with chronic medical conditions, and the very young are especially susceptible to heat's effects. Additionally, people working outdoors and athletes at practice will feel the effects sooner. Avoid direct sunlight when possible, check on those most at-risk twice a day, and be sure to drink enough fluids."

#### **For more information:**

On the Erie County Health Department, visit <http://www2.erie.gov/health/>

On the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention & extreme heat, visit

<http://www.cdc.gov/extremeheat/index.html>

On protecting children from extreme heat, visit

<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Protecting-Children-from-Extreme-Heat-Information-for-Parents.aspx>

# # #