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For immediate release

CITY HEALTH OFFICER REMINDS RESIDENTS TO STAY COOL

The City Health Officer for the Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services (Health Department), Dr. Mitchell Kushner, is advising residents to take precautions against the heat over the next few days. The National Weather Service is forecasting highs in the low to mid-90's through Saturday, September 8, 2013 in Long Beach, and even higher temperatures in other parts of Southern California.

"It's important for people to be familiar with and practice heat precautions to protect themselves from heat-related illness and injury, especially while participating in outdoor activities," says Dr. Kushner. The elderly, those with chronic illnesses, infants and young children are at greater risk for heat-related conditions. However everyone should take precautions to reduce the risk of heat related illness and injury:

- Remain hydrated by drinking water before, during, and after outdoor activities;
- Take frequent breaks while working or playing outdoors;
- Wear loose-fitting, light clothing; wear a wide-brimmed hat to cover the face, ears and neck if you'll be outside;
- Apply sunscreen (at least SPF 15) 15 minutes before going outdoors and re-apply at least every two hours – sunscreen prevents skin cancer.
- Drink plenty of fluids, but avoid beverages that have caffeine or alcohol;
- Plan strenuous outdoor activities for cooler parts of the day; limit time outside during peak heat;
- Pace physical activities, starting slowly and picking up the pace gradually;
- Wear sunglasses that provide 100 percent UVA and UVB protection. Chronic exposure to the sun can cause cataracts.
- Seek air-conditioned environments during peak heat at stores, malls, theaters, etc. – a list of the city's cooling centers (open weekdays as noted on schedule; extended or weekend hours may be added as necessary) can be found at <http://www.longbeach.gov/park/coolingcenters/>;
- Check on frail elderly or home-bound individuals to make sure they are not affected by the heat;
- Move to a cooler location at first sign of heat illness (dizziness, nausea, headaches, muscle cramps); rest and slowly drink a cool liquid;
- Never leave a child or pet in a parked car or asleep in the direct sunlight;
- Make sure pets have plenty of shade and water to drink.
- Prevent children from drowning by providing adult supervision at all times and having an entry-proof barrier that surrounds the pool or spa.
- Apply mosquito repellent containing DEET, picaridin, oil of eucalyptus, or IR 3535 according to label instructions. Mosquitoes can carry diseases such as the West Nile virus. Mosquitoes usually bite in the early morning and evening so it is important to wear repellent during these times.

For more information on how to stay healthy during hot weather please visit the Health Department's website at www.longbeach.gov/health.