

# Residents can cool it; relief from heat here

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Despite sweltering 98-degree temperatures on Staten Island yesterday afternoon, the National Weather Service is promising relief. Temperatures were expected to be lower today and through the weekend.

Yesterday's temperature and high humidity mimicked the recent five-day, 90-plus degree scorcher. The last time the temperature broke 90 degrees for five days in a row in June was in 1963, according to weather service records in Central Park.

The 98-degree temperature recorded yesterday at the Advance's Grasmere weather station — following Tuesday's high of only 84 — was 4 degrees higher than the temperature in Central Park, where the record for the date, 96 degrees, was set in 1961.

A brief but vicious evening thunderstorm cooled things off for a while and caused surprisingly little damage on Staten Island. The police and fire departments reported no utility poles or wires downed by the storm.

Although 9,000 customers lost electricity in the New York area, only eight customers on Staten Island were blacked out. Con Edison reported the homes, in New Springville, lost power shortly before 10 a.m. yesterday and power was restored by 5 a.m. today. The power loss is not believed to have been caused by the storm.

Nine heat-related deaths have been reported in New York City, according to authorities, but none have been on Staten Island.

The most serious rash of heat-related health problems on the Island was reported at the Staten Island Developmental Center (SIDC) in Willowbrook, where eight patients contracted hyperthermia — a condition marked by such symptoms as high fever, loss of body fluids and respiratory problems.

SIDC Director James Walsh said the eight victims were sent to Bayley Seton Hospital for treatment.

Walsh blamed the cases on a breakdown in the center's air-conditioning system, which has been out of service since last week. Walsh said the air conditioning should be working within a day.

Meanwhile, Doctors' Hospital reported that since the heat wave began last Thursday it has treated three elderly people for heat exhaustion and dehydration. The hospital's executive director Stephen Anderson said the hospital's emergency room was anticipating additional heat sufferers, but that "the elderly are the first to really feel this."

Richmond Memorial Hospital has treated nine people for severe sunburn since last Thursday, a spokesman said.