

Weather: High temps can be dangerous

By: **ANDREA VARDARO** (Thu, Jun/26/2003)

Yesterday customers packed local businesses that offered a way to cool off from the 95-degree weather, whether it was a water ride or a water ice.

Samantha Dornauer, 9, and Kelli Ellis, 9, both of Langhorne, got ice cream at the Dairy Delite in Middletown after a morning of wading in the Delaware River. They enjoyed spending "the first beautiful day" of their summer vacations outside, they said.

While temperatures still are a couple of degrees below the record for this time of year, the current heat is shocking to a lot of people given this spring's unseasonably cool weather.

Yesterday, the National Weather Service issued a heat warning for the southeast Pennsylvania region that remains in effect today.

AccuWeather meteorologist Ken Reeves said the "dramatic contrast" in recent temperatures will require an adjustment for most people.

"Last weekend's system moved out of the way and we moved from mid-April rain into late-June hot and steamy weather," he said.

Because of that, the American Red Cross issued a warning telling people that their bodies might not adjust as they normally do to summer weather.

Reeves said people react to dramatic temperature differences by going to extremes. Some overcompensate by "shutting down" and avoiding the heat, while others continue to go on as if no change has occurred. The bottom line, he said, is that "you can't do the same things as last week."

Sesame Place, a theme water park in Middletown that caters to families, is taking extra precautions to ensure the safety of its guests and employees, said Audrey Shapiro, director of consumer marketing.

When it's hotter, more employees are on duty to deal with the increased numbers of visitors in the water attractions who need lifeguards.

Sesame Place holds staff meetings every morning to advise employees on what sort of things to look for given the day's temperature.

Lisa Roman of Warrington took her two small children to Sesame Place yesterday for the second time this season. They picked yesterday to enjoy the warm sunshine.

This time, Roman noted that the water was a lot warmer, which she said her kids really appreciated. Roman said her family drank water all day and wore tons of sun block.

"[The kids] hate the sun block, but it's worth it because they like the rides," Roman said.

Shapiro said the park has "definitely seen an influx" in visitors since Monday, though its peak season doesn't come until July.

"Today's a really nice crowd," Shapiro said. "The sunshine brought a lot of people."

Rita's Water Ice employee Glenn Wagner of Middletown said, "It's like hand-to-hand combat here now that it's hot out in the evenings, and after people spend the day at the pool."

Rita's sales have gone up 50 percent since the weather changed, he said.

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