

Menu



Search

NewsCampaignsSocial Media

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Wednesday, July 22, 2015

MEDIA CONTACT: Connie Ress / Abigail Lootens

Department of Consumer Affairs

(212) 436-0042

press@dca.nyc.gov

Department of Consumer Affairs Encourages Businesses to "Shut the Front Door!" when the Air Conditioning is On

Hundreds of Volunteers Take to the Streets and Social Media to Ask Businesses to #BeCoolSaveFuel by Reducing Carbon Emissions While Also Saving on Electricity Costs

City and Council Work to Strengthen Existing Air Conditioning Law

Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Commissioner Julie Menin today announced a major education and outreach effort to encourage businesses to "Shut the Front Door!" when their air conditioning is on. Today more than 200 volunteers will visit nearly 45 business corridors throughout the five boroughs to educate businesses about the environmental and financial impacts of keeping their doors open while running the air conditioning. The campaign also includes efforts to strengthen the existing law, a multilingual informational flyer, social media engagement using **#BeCoolSaveFuel**, signs for businesses to post that they are proud to "Shut the Front Door!," and advertisements on bus shelters and phone kiosks.

“Throughout New York City, many businesses open their doors during the hot summer months to lure customers inside with cool air,” said **DCA Commissioner Julie Menin**. “This practice should never be seen as a cost of doing business—but a harmful cost to our city’s environment and a waste of money for the business. We ask businesses to do the right thing by shutting their doors when the AC is on and ask all New Yorkers to help us encourage businesses to #BeCoolSaveFuel.”

**SHUT
THE
FRONT
DOOR**

#BeCoolSaveFuel



**Stores that shut the front door while running
cooling systems **SAVE MONEY** on electricity
PROTECT NYC from carbon dioxide emissions**

For information or to file a complaint about a store with its front door shut while air conditioning is running, **contact 311** or visit **nyc.gov**





Bill de Blasio
Mayor

**Consumer
Affairs**

Julie Menin
Commissioner





**WE
SHUT
THE
FRONT
DOOR**

#BeCoolSaveFuel

Our store is proud to **pro
NYC's environment.**



“We passed the law to conserve energy, protecting both our environment and everyone who has to pay an electric bill,” said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**, who sponsored Local Law 38 of 2008 as a council member. “My office is participating in today’s day of action because it’s crucial that storefront retailers know their responsibilities, and that repeat violators of the law who are wasting energy by air conditioning the sidewalks will be penalized. I thank the Department of Consumer Affairs for stepping up enforcement this summer, and will keep working to turn up the heat on violators of this law.”

“Shutting the front doors of businesses so that air conditioning doesn’t escape can help reduce carbon emissions by thousands of tons,” said **Council Member Costa Constantinides, Chair of the Council’s Environmental Protection Committee**. “This practice of saving power will also see business owners reap real savings in their energy bills. I thank the Department of Consumer Affairs for spreading the word about this policy that will help us reach our goal of reducing carbon emissions by 80 percent by 2050. It will take the cooperation of everyone to make our city greener and save energy.”

“Retailers who leave store doors open while blasting their air conditioners are raising their energy costs, boosting the likelihood of blackouts or brownouts on peak energy days, and unnecessarily generating global warming emissions. So we applaud Commissioner Menin for launching this new education, outreach and enforcement initiative and welcome City Council amendments that would apply the law to all retailers regardless of size,” said **Eric A. Goldstein, New York City Environment Director at the Natural Resources Defense Council**, a key supporter of the 2008 statute.

As part of the Administration's sweeping environmental agenda, Mayor Bill de Blasio has committed to reducing New York City's emissions 80 percent by 2050 (80x50), with an interim goal of a 40 percent reduction by 2030 (40x30). Commercial buildings are responsible for 10 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions in New York City every year—comprising 20 percent of the city's emissions. Many of these emissions are generated by heating and cooling systems, which can be outdated and inefficient. Even as buildings are retrofitted to become more efficient, leaving doors open with the air conditioning on during the summer increases emissions and the cost of doing business. When a business leaves its doors open with a cooling system running, large amounts of cool air escape, forcing the system to expend more energy—and generate more emissions—to maintain the temperature. **According to Con Edison, if just one business closes its doors during the summer time, it can prevent the unnecessary release of more than 2.5 tons of carbon dioxide, save five barrels of oil, and save more than \$1,000 on electric bills.**

As part of this campaign, the City is also working with the City Council to strengthen the existing law (Local Law 38 of 2008), which currently requires chain stores with five or more locations in New York City or retail businesses that are 4,000 square feet or larger (excluding storage space) to close the door when the air conditioning is on. The current law also requires a business to receive a warning the first time it is found in violation of the law. Fines for the second violation start at \$200 and go up to \$400 for any additional violations in an 18-month period. The exemptions in the current law allow many small businesses to have their doors open with the air conditioning on. In 2015, DCA has conducted more enforcement than in any year since the law was enacted. Since June, DCA has inspected 860 businesses, issued 158 warnings, and 15 violations.

The proposed amendments to the existing law will be introduced at tomorrow's City Council Stated Meeting. The proposal would, among other changes, eliminate business size requirements and increase fines for non-compliance.

The Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) licenses, inspects, and educates businesses, assists and informs consumers, mediates complaints, and offers free financial counseling and safe banking products. DCA enforces the Consumer Protection Law, the Paid Sick Leave Law and other related business laws throughout New York City and licenses nearly 80,000 businesses in 55 different industries. For more information, call 311 or visit DCA online at nyc.gov/consumers or on its social media sites, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.