

## Torontonians chill out despite extreme heat alert

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As a teenager might say: *not cool*.

Because the city workers' strike forced the closure of several buildings usually designated "emergency cooling centres" on scorching summer days, the city yesterday told the overheated to chill at one of seven alternative facilities — including,

unfortunately, the Parkdale public library, where the air conditioning system was not working.

"I'm going to go to a shopping mall," said one sweating man, who would not provide his name, as he drank a cup of city-provided water in the library foyer.

In truth, the Parkdale library was not unbearably hot. Nor, according to many Torontonians, was the day itself.

The downtown temperature reached a one-hour average high of 30.1 C, with a humidex reading of 34. The city issued an extreme heat alert. But that warning is primarily intended to protect seniors, children and others at high risk for heat-related illness. Others were unimpressed.

"I went to Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Qatar, and the temperature was 50, 55, and I survived. Here, it gets to 30 and they start panicking," scoffed Lebanon native Ziad Abou-Chacra.

The 58-year-old spoke as he sat in the well-chilled Toronto Reference Library. He was not there, he said vehemently, because of the heat.



ADRIEN VECZAN/TORONTO STAR

*Sarah Bushnag, 11, drops from the Hydrofuge at Soak City in Ontario Place on June 24, 2009.*