



JOHN J. TECKLENBURG
MAYOR

City of Charleston
South Carolina

OFFICE OF
COMMUNICATIONS

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New City Horse Carriage Heat Ordinance Triggered by High Temperatures

Charleston, S.C.—Due to high sustained heat levels, Charleston Director of Livability and Tourism Dan Riccio ordered horse carriages to return to their barns at 2:40 p.m. today. This decision involved four consecutive temperature readings indicating 95 degree or higher conditions, the heat limit for horse carriage operation in Charleston.

Under city law, the carriages could have resumed normal operations at 4 p.m., when the temperature had fallen below the 95 degree threshold for two consecutive readings, but carriage company operators voluntarily chose to remain off duty the rest of the day.

Earlier this year, Charleston City Council approved a change to the city's existing carriage tour business regulations that lowered the heat limit for horse carriage operation from 98 to 95 degrees. Additionally, the heat index limit was reduced from 125 to 110 degrees.

“On hot summer days like today, we keep a close eye on the temperature and heat index to ensure the carriage horses are not working in extreme conditions,” Riccio said. “That’s why the recent ordinance changes lowering the temperature for calling in the horses were so critical. They gave us the tools we needed to act quickly as the temperature began to rise to very high levels.”

MEDIA CONTACT:

Jack O’Toole, Director of Communications
Media Relations/Public Information
(843) 518-3228
otoolej@charleston-sc.gov