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## Top Stories



### Report Says Ambulance Wait Times Were Up Five-Fold During Heat Wave

**DIAL UP BROAD BAND**

June 15, 2008

In what city officials fear could be a bad sign for the future, dozens of sick New Yorkers spent last week's heat wave waiting for medical help due to a shortage of medics.

The New York Post says the city's 911 system was overwhelmed with nearly 15,000 calls during the four day period.

That amount is five times the number of calls the already-understaffed workforce of EMTs and paramedics normally deals with.

As a result, sick residents were forced to wait for ambulances for up to an hour.

Eight people died from heat related causes last week.

The Post also reports that the force of 2,000 staffers is scheduled to shrink next month when 85 members

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leave on July 1st. Included in that number are 17 paramedics who are becoming firefighters.

Critics say low salaries and heavy overtime make it hard to recruit and keep quality workers.

City officials say they'll have to work around the smaller staff.

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