



Safety Bulletin
May 2024

Heat Illness Prevention

Summer is around the corner and for those of you that work or play outside, there may be days when it can be tough to cope with extreme heat. Heat-related deaths and illness are preventable yet annually people succumb to extreme heat. Regulatory attention has been a focus for those that work outdoors due to a high number of occupational fatalities. OSHA has put a great deal of emphasis on employers to ensure their employees are protected during extremely hot days.



Cal-OSHA has a website for employers on Heat Illness [Prevention](#).

California employers must take these four steps to prevent heat illness:

Training

Train all employees and supervisors about heat illness prevention.

Water

Provide enough fresh water so that each employee can drink at least one quart per hour, or four 8-ounce glasses of water per hour and encourage them to do so.

Shade

Provide access to shade and encourage employees to take a cool-down rest in the shade for at least 5 minutes. They should not wait until they feel sick to cool down.

Planning

Develop and implement written procedures for following the Cal/OSHA Heat Illness Prevention Standard.

Under OSHA law, employers are responsible for providing workplaces free of known safety hazards. This includes protecting workers from extreme heat. An employer with workers exposed to high temperatures should establish a complete heat illness prevention program.

Any heat illness prevention program should include the following:

- Workers should be provided with adequate water, rest, and shade during the workday.
- New or returning workers should be allowed to gradually increase workloads and take more frequent breaks as they build up their tolerance to working in the heat.
- Emergency plans for first aid and medical transport should any employee show signs of heat illness.
- Safety meetings to train workers on heat illness prevention.
- Safety meetings to train workers to recognize symptoms of heat-related illnesses in themselves and their co-workers.
- Training program for supervisors on preventing and recognizing heat-related illnesses.
- Monitoring program set up during every shift to ensure water, rest and shade are being adequately provided and heat-related illnesses are being prevented and caught early as symptoms are noticed.

Every year, dozens of workers die and thousands more become ill while working in extreme heat or humid conditions. More than 40 percent of heat-related worker deaths occur in the construction industry, but workers in every field are susceptible. There are a range of heat illnesses and they can affect anyone, regardless of age or physical condition. Agencies are getting creative with their heat

illness prevention programs. Here are impressive examples of how companies across the country are making sure their workers stay safe, but still get the job done, when temperatures soar in the summertime.

- Implement a buddy system within shifts so workers can keep an eye on each other and report heat illness symptoms quickly to the supervisor.
- Set up portable canopies outside with misting hoses woven throughout the frames to cover workers with a fine mist of water to help keep everyone cool.
- Cooling caps and bandanas are provided to all outdoor workers.
- Monitor the OSHA-NIOSH Heat Safety App and follow the provided recommendations.
- When temperatures are expected to be especially high, provide earlier shift options and added breaks.
- Keep reinforcing the heat illness prevention message throughout the entire summer by sending text messages and emails to all workers, posting signs and posters around the job site, and giving frequent toolbox talks on the hazards of heat exposure.
- When working inside shops, hangars, and warehouses that get exceedingly hot, provide plenty of large fans, ice machines and water dispensers and rotate jobs to cooler locations inside and out.
- Train all workers in First Aid/CPR with emphasis on recognition of heat stress.
- Share the message about heat illness prevention as often as possible. This should be part of the agencies' tailgate meetings.

Workers need to be aware of their specific limitations and remember that sometimes their body may not cool off fast enough. Factors that can increase the chance of heat stress include:

- High temperature and humidity
- Not drinking enough water
- Direct exposure (with no shade) or extreme heat
- No breeze or wind
- Physical activity without breaks
- Use of bulky protective clothing and equipment.



To learn more about heat-related illnesses like heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke you can visit the OSHA [page](#) on Occupational Heat Exposure.

Resource:

ICRMA – Sample Heat Illness [Program](#)

ICRMA – Heat Illness Prevention Training is available to the members.

ICRMA Training Update

University Session – May 23, 2024. Topic - Seasonal Workforce

University Session – June 27, 2024. Topic – Effective use of Safety or Risk Committees and Near Misses

If you have questions about either of these programs contact Bob May, Director of Loss Control. Phone 760.221.8205 or biem47@outlook.com