

# HEAT STRESS POLICY AND TRAINING

## SUMMARY

The document outlines policies and guidelines for employees working in extreme weather conditions, focusing on hot weather stress, sun exposure, and heat illness prevention.

- **Hot Weather Stress:** Employees should protect themselves against heat, sun exposure, and other hazards during hot summer months. Potable drinking water will be provided throughout the work shift if not continuously supplied.
- **Sun Exposure:** Sunlight contains ultraviolet (UV) radiation that can cause skin damage and cancer. The amount of damage depends on the strength of the light, length of exposure, and skin protection.
- **Skin Cancer Risk Factors:** Employees who burn easily, spend a lot of time outdoors, or have numerous, irregular, or large moles, freckles, fair skin, or light-colored hair should be especially careful in the sun.
- **Self-Examination for Skin Cancer:** Employees should examine their body monthly for signs of skin cancer, such as changing spots, pale nodules, red patches, sores that don't heal, or mole-like growths.
- **Heat Illness Prevention:** Exposure to heat can cause serious illnesses like heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps, and heat rash. The Company will take special measures during high temperatures and heavy physical work.
- **Precautions for Heat Stress:** To reduce heat stress, employees should drink water frequently, wear light clothing, take breaks in the shade, eat smaller meals, avoid caffeine and alcohol, work in the shade, and be aware of medication interactions.
- **Heat Illness Response:** Employees with heat illness will be provided access to shaded areas. Supervisors must be trained in heat illness prevention and response, including emergency procedures.
- **Risk Factors for Heat Illness:** Factors contributing to heat illness include high temperature and humidity, direct sun exposure, heavy physical labor, low liquid intake, and waterproof clothing.
- **Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion and Stroke:** Heat exhaustion symptoms include headache, dizziness, weakness, irritability, and nausea. Heat stroke symptoms include confusion, collapse, and lack of sweating.

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## POLICY

### Hot Weather Stress

Hot summer months pose special hazards for employees who will protect themselves against heat, sun exposure, and other hazards.

Employees will have access to potable drinking water. Where it is not plumbed or otherwise continuously supplied, it will be provided in sufficient quantity throughout the work shift.

### Working in the Sun

Sunlight contains ultraviolet (UV) radiation, which causes premature aging of the skin, wrinkles, cataracts, and skin cancer. The amount of damage from UV exposure depends on the strength of the light, the length of exposure, and whether the skin is protected. There are no safe UV rays or safe suntans!

### Skin Cancer

Sun exposure at any age can cause skin cancer. Employees should be especially careful in the sun if they burn easily, spend a lot of time outdoors, or have any of the following physical features:

- Numerous, irregular, or large moles
- Freckles
- Fair skin
- Blond, red, or light brown hair.

### Self-Examination

It's important for employees to examine their body monthly because skin cancers detected early can almost always be cured. The most important warning sign is a spot on the skin that is changing in size, shape, or color during a period of 1 month to 1 or 2 years. Skin cancers often take the following forms:

- Pale, wax-like, pearly nodules.
- Red, scaly, sharply outlined patches.
- Sores that don't heal.
- Small, mole-like growths—melanoma, the most serious type of skin cancer.

**Exposure to heat can cause illness and death!** The most serious heat illness is heat stroke. Other heat illnesses, such as heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat rash, need to be avoided.

The Company will take special measures and precautions any time the temperatures are high and the job involves strong/heavy physical work.

Physical factors that contribute to heat related illness should be taken into consideration before performing a task. The most common physical factors that can contribute to heat

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related illness are type of work, level of physical activity and duration, and clothing color, weight and breathability.

Supervisors must ensure personal factors that contribute to heat related illness are taken into consideration before assigning a task where there is the possibility of a heat-related illness occurring. The most common personal factors that can contribute to heat related illness are age, weight/fitness, drug/alcohol use, prior heat-related illness, etc.

The Company recommends the following precautions to reduce the potential for heat stress:

- Drink small amounts of water frequently.
- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting, breathable clothing.
- Take frequent short breaks in cool shade.
- Eat smaller meals before work activity.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol or large amounts of sugar.
- Work in the shade.
- Find out from your health care provider if your medications and heat don't mix.
- Know that equipment such as respirators or work suits can increase heat stress.

### Heat Illness

Employees suffering from heat illness or believing a preventative recovery period is needed, will be provided access to an area with shade that is either open to the air or provided with ventilation or cooling. Such access to shade will be permitted at all times.

Supervisors must receive training in the prevention of heat related illnesses prior to supervising employees working in heat. Supervisors should be trained in the employer's heat illness procedures to prevent heat illness and procedures to follow when an employee exhibits symptoms consistent with possible heat illness, including emergency response procedures.

Procedures must be in place to control the effects of environmental factors that can contribute to heat related illness. The most common environmental factors are air temperature, humidity, radiant heat sources and air circulation. .

The Company will educate employees on ways to provide salt replacement when affected and/or exposed to hot climates that have the potential to cause heat related illnesses.

Risk Factors for Heat Illness:

- High temperature and humidity, direct sun exposure, no breeze or wind
- Heavy physical labor
- No recent exposure to hot workplaces
- Low liquid intake
- Waterproof clothing

Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion:

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- Headache, dizziness, or fainting
- Weakness and wet skin
- Irritability or confusion
- Thirst, nausea, or vomiting

Symptoms of Heat Stroke:

- May be confused, unable to think clearly, pass out, collapse, or have seizures (fits)
- May stop sweating

### **What to Do When an Employee is Ill from the Heat?**

- Call a supervisor for help. If the supervisor is not available, call 911.
- Have someone stay with the worker until help arrives.
- Move the worker to a cooler/shaded area.
- Remove outer clothing.
- Fan and mist the worker with water; apply ice (ice bags or ice towels).
- Provide cool drinking water, if able to drink.
- If an employee is not alert or seems confused, this may be a heat stroke. CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY and apply ice as soon as possible.

Heat Stress:

Hot summer months pose special hazards for outdoor employees who will protect themselves against heat, sun exposure, and other hazards.

Working in the Sun: Sunlight contains ultraviolet (UV) radiation, which causes premature aging of the skin, wrinkles, cataracts, and skin cancer. The amount of damage from UV exposure depends on the strength of the light, the length of exposure, and whether the skin is protected. There are no safe UV rays or safe suntans.

Skin Cancer: Sun exposure at any age can cause skin cancer. Be especially careful in the sun if you burn easily, spend a lot of time outdoors, or have any of the following physical features:

- Numerous, irregular, or large moles
- Freckles
- Fair skin
- Blond, red, or light brown hair.

Self-Examination: It's important to examine your body monthly because skin cancers detected early can almost always be cured. The most important warning sign is a spot on the skin that is changing in size, shape, or color during a period of 1 month to 1 or 2 years. Skin cancers often take the following forms:

- Pale, wax-like, pearly nodules.
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Exposure to heat can cause illness and death. The most serious heat illness is heat stroke. Other heat illnesses, such as heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat rash, need to be avoided. The Company will take special measures and precautions any time the temperatures are high and the job involves strong/heavy physical work.

The Company recommends the following precautions to reduce the potential for heat stress:

Drink small amounts of water frequently.

- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting, breathable clothing—cotton is good.
- Take frequent short breaks in cool shade.
- Eat smaller meals before work activity.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol or large amounts of sugar.
- Work in the shade.
- Find out from your health care provider if your medications and heat don't mix.
- Know that equipment such as respirators or work suits can increase heat stress.

Heat Illness:

Exposure to heat can cause illness and death. The most serious heat illness is heat stroke. Other heat illnesses, such as heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat rash, should also be avoided. There are precautions that can be taken any time temperatures are high and the job involves physical work.

Risk Factors for Heat Illness:

- High temperature and humidity, direct sun exposure, no breeze or wind
- Heavy physical labor
- No recent exposure to hot workplaces
- Low liquid intake
- Waterproof clothing

Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion:

- Headache, dizziness, or fainting
- Weakness and wet skin
- Irritability or confusion
- Thirst, nausea, or vomiting

Symptoms of Heat Stroke:

- May be confused, unable to think clearly, pass out, collapse, or have seizures (fits)
- May stop sweating

What to Do When an Employee is Ill from the Heat?

- Call a supervisor for help. If the supervisor is not available, call 911.
- Have someone stay with the worker until help arrives.
- Move the worker to a cooler/shaded area.
- Remove outer clothing.
- Fan and mist the worker with water; apply ice (ice bags or ice towels).

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- Provide cool drinking water, if able to drink.
- If an employee is not alert or seems confused, this may be a heat stroke. CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY and apply ice as soon as possible.

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## **TRAINING**

### Training Requirements:

- The Company is responsible for providing workplaces free of known safety hazards which includes protecting employees from extreme heat.
- The Company has a heat illness program for employees exposed to high temperatures that includes: providing employees with water, rest and shade; allowing new or returning employees to gradually increase workloads and take more frequent breaks as they acclimatize, or build a tolerance for working in the heat; planning for emergencies by training employees on heat stress prevention; and, monitoring employees for signs of heat illness.

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## OSHA STANDARDS

### OSHA Heat Stress Fact Sheets:

- English: Working Outdoors in Warm Climates - [https://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data\\_Hurricane\\_Facts/working\\_outdoors.pdf](https://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_Hurricane_Facts/working_outdoors.pdf)
- English: Protecting Workers from the Effects of Heat - [https://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data\\_Hurricane\\_Facts/heat\\_stress.pdf](https://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_Hurricane_Facts/heat_stress.pdf)

### Publications:

- English: Protecting Yourself in the Sun - <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/osha3166.pdf>
- Spanish: Protecting Yourself in the Sun - <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/osha3168.pdf>



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Even OSHA's own website has a disclaimer:

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Company Disclaimer:

- The following has been developed to reduce hazards likely to cause injuries to our employees.
- Some of the following policies may not be applicable to our operations. This manual serves as a guideline and is subject to change or modification as particular circumstances warrant.
- Employees should contact their immediate supervisor or senior management with questions.
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Reference OSHA Standards:

- Refer to the OSHA standards and updates issued by OSHA for the most accurate information.
- This document is based on OSHA's [Training Requirements in OSHA Standards](#) document.
- When there is a conflict between the contents in this document and, as applicable, [OSHA 29 CFR Part 1926 Safety and Health Regulations for Construction](#) or [OSHA 29 CFR Part 1910 Safety and Health Regulations for General Industry](#), the OSHA standards and other regulatory updates will prevail.