Prevent Heat Illness at Work

Outdoor and indoor heat exposure can be dangerous.

Ways to Protect Yourself and Others

Ease into Work

- Nearly 3 out of 4 fatalities from heat illness happen during the first week of work.
  - New and returning workers need to build tolerance to heat (acclimatize) and take frequent breaks.
  - Follow the 20% Rule. On the first day, work no more than 20% of the shift’s duration at full intensity in the heat. Increase the duration of time at full intensity by no more than 20% a day until workers are used to working in the heat.

Drink Cool Water

- Drink cool water even if you are not thirsty — at least 1 cup every 20 minutes.

Take Rest Breaks

- Take enough time to recover from heat given the temperature, humidity, and conditions.

Find Shade or a Cool Area

- Take breaks in a designated shady or cool location.

Dress for the Heat

- Wear a hat and light-colored, loose-fitting, and breathable clothing if possible.

Watch Out for Each Other

- Monitor yourself and others for signs of heat illness.

If Wearing a Face Covering

- Change your face covering if it gets wet or soiled. Verbally check on others frequently.

First Aid for Heat Illness

The following are signs of a medical emergency!

- Abnormal thinking or behavior
- Slurred speech
- Seizures
- Loss of consciousness

1 » CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY

2 » COOL THE WORKER RIGHT AWAY WITH WATER OR ICE

3 » STAY WITH THE WORKER UNTIL HELP ARRIVES

Watch for any other signs of heat illness and act quickly. When in doubt, call 911.

If a worker experiences:

- Headache or nausea
- Weakness or dizziness
- Heavy sweating or hot, dry skin
- Elevated body temperature
- Thirst
- Decreased urine output

Take these actions:

- Give water to drink
- Remove unnecessary clothing
- Move to a cooler area
- Cool with water, ice, or a fan
- Do not leave alone
- Seek medical care if needed

For more information: 1-800-321-OSHA (6742)
TTY 1-877-889-5627 www.osha.gov/heat

Federal law entitles you to a safe workplace. You have the right to speak up about hazards without fear of retaliation. See https://www.osha.gov/workers for information about how to file a confidential complaint with OSHA and ask for an inspection.