Working in confined spaces can increase a worker’s risk of heat illness.

- The temperature is often higher than outside air
- There is usually low airflow
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) can cause body overheating
Know the signs of heat illness

Take action at the first sign of heat illness. Heat illness can worsen 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:

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

What you can do to prevent heat illness

Create a plan and provide training

- Develop a plan that aids in preventing heat illness and communicate it to supervisors and workers. Include elements such as monitoring, acclimatization, work-rest schedule, and emergencies.
- Train all workers on heat illness risks, symptoms, and response procedures, as well as prevention measures.

Plan work schedules

- Allow new and returning workers to build tolerance to heat (acclimatize) and take frequent breaks. Follow the 20% rule. This safety practice prescribes that no more than 20% of the shift’s duration is worked at full intensity in the heat for the first day. Increase the duration of time at full intensity by no more than 20% a day until workers are used to working in the heat.
- Adjust work durations or period of day work is scheduled based on heat conditions. Consider rotating jobs among workers.

Set controls and monitor on-site activity

- Check the temperature in the space before work. Use the OSHA-NIOSH Heat Safety Tool App when planning outdoor activities.
- Ventilate the space to bring in cooler air and create airflow.
- Implement a buddy system where workers monitor themselves and each other for signs of heat illness.
- Designate a cool or shady area for breaks.
- Provide cool drinking water. Encourage workers to drink at least 1 cup every 20 minutes.
- Have workers wear loose-fitting, breathable clothing, where possible.

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

For more information on other confined space hazards visit www.osha.gov/maritime.

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

Scan the QR code for more information.