



# Weekly Safety Meeting

*Your Safety Is Our Business®*

Volume 1, Issue 23

June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014

## Heat Stress Safety – Prepare for Hot Weather

With hot weather comes the realization that some workers will be exposed to excessive heat — hot conditions that pose special hazards to their safety and health. Knowing the warning signs and what to do if heat stress occurs could turn around a potentially dangerous situation.

Environmental factors that play a role in the amount of heat stress a worker faces include temperature, humidity, radiant heat (such as from the sun or a furnace), and air velocity. Personal characteristics such as age, weight, fitness, and medical condition also are important factors in a person's ability to deal with excessive heat. Keep the following information handy, especially for the next few months.

**Heat exhaustion** — Results from loss of fluid through sweating when a worker has failed to drink enough fluids. If heat exhaustion is not treated, the illness may advance to heat stroke.

Symptoms include:

- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Weakness
- Mood changes (irritable or confused)
- Upset stomach
- Vomiting
- Decreased and dark colored urine
- Fainting
- Pale clammy skin

### What should be done?

- Move victims to a cool shaded area; don't leave them alone. If victims are dizzy or light headed, lay them on their backs and raise the legs about 6–8 inches. If victims have an upset stomach, have them lay on their side.
- Loosen and remove any heavy clothing.
- If the victim does not have an upset stomach, offer cool water (a small cup every 15 minutes).
- Cool the victim by fanning, mist the skin with a cool spray, or apply a cool wet cloth.
- If the victim doesn't feel better in a few minutes, call for emergency help (ambulance or call 911).



**Heat stroke** — Caused by the body's failure to regulate its core temperature. Sweating stops and the body can no longer rid itself of excess heat. Victims of heat stroke will die unless treated promptly.

Symptoms include:

- Dry pale skin (no sweating)
- Hot red skin (looks like a sunburn)
- Mood changes (irritable or confused)
- Seizures
- Collapse/pass out (will not respond)

**What should be done?**

- Call for emergency help (ambulance or call 911).
- Move victims to a cool shaded area; don't leave them alone.
- Lay them on their backs and raise the legs about 6–8 inches. If they are having seizures, remove any objects close by to avoid injury.
- If victims have an upset stomach, have them lay on their side.
- Remove any heavy outer clothing.
- If the victim is alert enough to drink and does not have an upset stomach, offer cool water (a small cup every 15 minutes).
- Cool by fanning, misting with a cool water spray, applying a wet cloth or wet sheet.
- If ice is available, place ice packs under the arm pits and groin area.

**Heat cramps** — Caused when workers drink large quantities of water but fail to replace their bodies' salt loss. Tired muscles used for performing work are usually the ones most susceptible to cramps. Symptoms include painful muscle spasms.

**What should be done?**

Provide liquids by mouth or saline solutions intravenously for quicker relief, if medically determined to be required.



**Fainting** — Occurs when a worker is not acclimated to a hot environment and stands still for long periods of time. A temporary decrease of blood to the brain causes the person to lose consciousness.

**What should be done?**

Victims usually recover quickly after a brief period of lying down. Encourage moving around rather than standing still to reduce the possibility of fainting

**Heat rash** — Also known as prickly heat, may occur in hot and humid environments where sweat is not easily removed from the surface of the skin by evaporation. It often occurs in areas where clothing presses or rubs against the skin. The sweat ducts become plugged causing a rash to appear.

**What should be done?**

The person should rest in a cool place to allow the skin to dry.

**Heat Stress Can Kill...Take Time to Cool Down!!**



# Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Supervisor:	Subject:
Location:	Date:
Conducted By:	Trainer Signature:

Name (print clearly)	Signature	Comments / Safety Concerns / Training Requests