



# Weekly Safety Meeting

*Your Safety Is Our Business®*

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## Heat is Coming

One of the most significant hazards that summer brings is heat illness. Although there may not have been very many truly hot and humid days yet this year, now is the time we need to talk about heat illness. Quite honestly, your body is probably not yet ready for the summer heat. Your body gradually adjusts to working in a warm environment through a process known as “acclimatization.” So until your body has been acclimatized, you need to be especially mindful of how to prevent heat illness injuries, how to recognize heat illness, and how to treat heat illness.

Heat stress is commonly associated with warm weather. It's true that warm weather increases the number of heat-stress injuries and illnesses. Warm weather isn't the only cause of heat stress, though. Heat stress can occur any time the surrounding temperature is elevated. Even if the weather is cool, you may work in warm areas, indoors or out. Be alert for conditions which could cause heat stress and take precautions to prevent it.

### Six main factors are involved in causing heat stress:

- Temperature;
- Humidity;
- Movement of air;
- Radiant temperature of the surroundings;
- Clothing; and
- Physical activity.

Adjusting to these factors, and/or controlling them, reduces the chance of heat stress. Your body can adjust to working in a warm environment through acclimatization. Check with your company's safety people for the exact way to properly acclimatize yourself. Acclimatization processes involve gradually increasing the amount of time you spend working in a hot environment. This gradual increase allows your body to properly adjust to the heat.

Keep in mind though, even if you're already acclimatized, changing conditions can stress your body even more. Bright sunshine, high humidity, and sources of heat in the workplace can affect your body's ability to cool itself. If conditions change, make sure you re-acclimate yourself to those new conditions. If you're away from work for a few days, or if you experience a brief period of cooler temperatures while working, you will need to re-acclimate yourself before you try to work a full shift in the hot conditions.

### Engineering controls:

- Control the heat source through use of insulation and reflective barriers.
- Exhaust hot air or steam away from the work area.
- Use air-conditioning.
- Use air-conditioned rest areas.
- Use fans to circulate the air.
- Reduce the physical demands of the work by using mechanical equipment.



### Administrative controls:

- Increase the frequency and duration of rest breaks.
- Provide a break area out of the direct sun.
- Schedule tasks to avoid heavy physical activity during the hottest parts of the day.
- Provide cool drinking water or an electrolyte-replacement drink and encourage its consumption.
- Use additional workers for the job or slow down the pace of the work.
- Make sure everyone understands the signs and symptoms of heat stress.

### Ways to prevent heat stress:

- Drink plenty of cool water (one small cup every 15-20 minutes).
- Wear light, loose-fitting, breathable (like cotton) clothing.
- Take your breaks away from heat sources or direct sunlight allowing your body to cool down.
- Avoid eating large meals before working in hot environments.
- Avoid caffeine and alcoholic beverages; these beverages make the body lose water and increase the risk for heat illnesses.

Preventing heat illness relies on keeping the body as cool and hydrated as possible. Employees working in hot conditions benefit from frequent breaks, access to water, and a resting location away from the heat. This can be something like an air conditioned break room or a tent, allowing workers to cool down before returning to work. Wearing protective clothing to keep the body cool can also help.

**“Chill Out” Avoid Heat Stress!!**



## Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

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

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