

## **Addendum to the Accident Prevention Program Outdoor Heat Exposure (May – September\*)**

**Purpose:** To help prevent heat-related illnesses and injuries.

### **Which workers does this program cover?**

Anyone working outdoors more than 15 minutes in any 60-minute period in temperatures:

- As low as 52°F when wearing clothing that is non-breathable or provides a vapor barrier like rain gear, chemical resistant suits, or Level A suits.
- Starting at 77°F when wearing double layer woven clothing like sweatshirts, coveralls, and jackets on top of other clothes.
- At 89°F when wearing any other type of clothing like typical shirts and pants.

Some individuals are more susceptible to heat stress than others. For example, individuals who aren't acclimatized or who come to work dehydrated.

Workers doing the following jobs or tasks at our worksites are considered to meet the descriptions above:

Job: craft workers performing work that meets or exceeds the outdoor temperatures and activities identified above (52°F, 77°F, 89°F) includes laborers, carpenters, forklift operators, form work, pouring/finishing decks, and miscellaneous activity.

### **Prevention measures to follow:**

Workers and supervisors share responsibility for safety at the jobsite. This includes watching out for yourself and others because heat illness can become a life-threatening condition quickly if unnoticed or ignored. Speak up if you notice anything that could be unsafe or result in someone getting hurt or sick.

**Start the day safe, do the work safe and go home safe.**

### **1. Setting up the worksite for shade**

*1.) Crew trailers are available as break areas on each new construction jobsite. 2.) The supervisor will identify break areas for shade on jobsites to include temporary structures, walls, trees or set up a portable canopy if needed. 3.) Tenant Improvement remodeling projects in occupied buildings have conditioned spaces.*

\*This hazard can occur at other times during the year. If so, we will apply all necessary safety measures to prevent heat-related illnesses and injuries.

4.) Supervisors will identify and evaluate heat prevention in non-conditioned tenant improvement projects. Non-conditioned areas will be provided fans, open windows (if possible) and vents.

## 2. Work scheduling to reduce heat exposure

The supervisor will take necessary precautions to reduce heat exposure and schedule accordingly, especially during a heat wave. Additional breaks for rest and water, and timing changes may be options

## 3. Hydration

Don't wait to be thirsty to drink water, and don't drink it all at once. In fact, it's best to start drinking water before work. Drink small amounts often throughout the day to stay hydrated. Additional water breaks are allowed during hot days.

Drink at least 1 cup every 15-20 minutes

- Sport drinks low in sugar are okay.
- Avoid drinks with caffeine and high sugar content like sodas because they won't hydrate you.
  
- Enough water will be provided to allow each employee to drink at least a quart of water each hour.

*(Additional water jugs for water coolers and bottled water will be provided by the water vendor on hotter days and as needed. Adequate supplies of water will be available for each employee.*

*The supervisor is responsible for setting up supplies, checking water levels and replenishes the supplies. Jobsite hose bibs will be identified as potable water for drinking if available. Shared cups/bottles are not allowed, not dipping cups in water, and not drinking from non-potable water sources like lakes or from hoses not labeled as safe for drinking.*

## 4. Adjusting to heat (acclimatization)

It takes about two weeks to fully adjust to hot working conditions. This adjustment is lost if you are away from the hot conditions for a week or more. Acclimatization is especially critical for heavy work in hot temperatures.

*Employees will be reminded on days of high heat to not overdue, maintain a buddy system, take shade/water breaks as needed and notify their supervisor immediately if they are not feeling well or experiencing any heat related symptoms.*

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## 5. Training

Each year before May, employees working on the jobs listed above will be provided with safety training on the dangers of outdoor heat exposure, the steps we take to protect them, and actions they must follow to prevent heat-related illness.

Additional training will be provided by the supervisor when a new employee is hired during May – September.

### Employees need to be aware of:

- How heat can make them sick, and how to recognize the common signs and symptoms of heat-related illness in themselves and coworkers. Four most common conditions are heat rash, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.
- The environmental factors that increase risk for heat-related illness such as higher temperatures, humidity, sunlight (working under direct sunlight makes it feel about 15 degrees hotter), additional sources of heat like powered equipment and asphalt, no wind, level of physical activity, and wearing of personal protective equipment (PPE) or layers of clothing.
- Personal factors that may increase susceptibility to heat-related illness including age, not being acclimatized, having medical conditions such as hormonal and heart issues and diabetes, dehydration, and use of substances that can affect the body's response to heat like drugs, alcohol, caffeine, nicotine, and medications.
- The importance of removing heat-retaining PPE such as non-breathable chemical resistant clothing during all breaks to allow their body to cool down.
- How to stay well hydrated by drinking small quantities of water or other acceptable beverages frequently throughout the day.
- The importance of acclimatization (to get used to the conditions). It takes about 5 days to start and two weeks to be fully acclimated.
- How to immediately report signs or symptoms of heat-related illness they experience or observe in coworkers, and how to **immediately** respond to prevent the situation from becoming a medical emergency. How to identify and what to do during a heat-related medical emergency (e.g., potential heat stroke).

### Supervisors need to know the following (in addition to what is detailed for employees above):

- The procedures to follow to implement the heat-related illness prevention plan including the acclimatization schedule, how to keep track of environmental

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conditions throughout the day, when to increase the number of breaks or stop work early, to check that workers are accessing shade and water (especially for mobile operations), encourage them to stay hydrated, and communicate with lone workers to ensure they are safe.

- When to provide personal protective equipment like cooling vests and gel-filled bandanas.
- What the Supervisor needs to do if an employee shows signs and symptoms of possible heat-related illness including appropriate emergency response procedures including how to transport any affected employees to a medical service provider.

## **6. Responding to reports or observations of heat-related illness.**

Let a supervisor or someone nearby know if you or a co-worker is experiencing any signs or symptoms of heat-related illness and take immediate action to ensure things don't get dangerously worse.

1. Time is critical. Get the worker away from the hot area into a cool shaded area. Quick action increases the chances for a full recovery.
2. Let the worker rest and drink cool water. (As appropriate, help remove PPE and extra clothing, apply cold towel or ice pack).
3. Never leave an employee who is experiencing heat-related problems alone, things could get worse.
4. If the employee does not respond quickly, call emergency medical services. Responder and medical services are posted on the Safety Board.
5. If the employee receives medical attention get a written authorization from the provider that the worker can get back to work and if there is any restriction or limitations.

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