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Protecting Workers from Heat Stress

Your Top 10 Safety Tips



REDUCING RISK IN HIGH TEMPERATURES

Construction workers exposed to extremely high temperatures can be at risk for heat-related illnesses (HRIs) and injuries. HRIs include heat stroke, heat exhaustion, fainting, heat cramps, and heat rash. High temperatures can also increase the risk of jobsite injuries to workers as the heat may induce sweaty palms, fogged-up safety glasses, and dizziness. Take these precautions when temperatures are high and the job involves heavy physical work.

YOUR TOP 10 SAFETY TIPS

- 1 OSHA recommends a cup of water every 20 minutes while working in the heat and to avoid alcohol, coffee, soda and energy drinks
- 2 Electrolyte drinks (Gatorade, Pedialyte, fresh juice) can be used to supplement one-third of the water recommendation
- 3 Workers should be trained to recognize early signs of heat stroke and other illnesses so medical treatment can be sought as quickly as possible
- 4 Workers who are age 65 or older, are overweight, have heart disease or high blood pressure, or take medications affected by extreme temperatures are at higher risk to HRIs and should take extra precautions
- 5 If you are a new employee, it will take 10-14 days to acclimate to hot humid weather and 2-3 days to re-acclimate if you are returning
- 6 Shift your shift: Adjust work hours to cooler times of the day
- 7 Wear lightweight, loose-fitting cotton clothing, safety glasses with UV protection, SPF35+ sunscreen, neck covers, and a brimmed hard hat
- 8 Take frequent breaks in the shade or a cool area such as an air-conditioned building or car when possible
- 9 Eat light lunches that include fruits, vegetables and salads that will not put a high caloric load on the digestive system like fatty junk foods
- 10 Watch your co-workers for early symptoms of heat exhaustion such as lethargy, disorientation, stumbling, dropping tools, slurred speech or unresponsiveness

BONUS TIP Use adequate fans for ventilation and spot cooling, this is especially important due to personal protective equipment (PPE)

75%

HEAT FATALITIES OCCURRING
IN THE SUMMER MONTHS

100%

RECOGNIZED IN TIME,
REVERSIBLE HEAT ILLNESSES

85°F

TEMPERATURE OSHA HEAT
ILLNESS MEASURES BEGIN