



Weekly Safety Briefings

Week 24: June 5th – 9th, 2023

Summer Heat Safety

Introduction

Summer has arrived and it's heating up out there! It's time to start thinking about how to keep your employees and co-workers safe in their work environment with temperatures increasing. Summer comes every year yet somehow it seems to arrive before we are ready. This week we will discuss heat related illness, tips for hot weather safety and have an open discussion about ways you can prepare in the workplace.

Monday- Heat Cramps/Rash

Heat cramps are painful cramps in the body's muscles due to low salt levels and are typically caused by excessive sweating without replenishing water and electrolytes. Symptoms of heat cramps are: Muscle pain or spasms in the abdomen, arms or legs.

Heat rash is an irritation of the skin caused by excessive sweating. Symptoms of heat rash include: red clusters of pimple like bumps or small blisters.

How to treat: In both cases, the person should be moved to a cool area and given water and electrolytes.

Tuesday – Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is the body's response to the loss of water and salt, typically through sweating. Symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

- Excessive sweating
- Weakness or fatigue
- Dizziness and/or confusion
- Clammy Skin
- Muscle Cramps
- Flushed Complexion

How to treat: Heat exhaustion is a warning for worse things to come if the person is not cooled off immediately and provided water and electrolytes. The person should not return to work until fully recovered.

Wednesday – Heat Stroke

Heat stroke occurs when the body no longer sweats and the body temperature reaches dangerous levels.

Symptoms of heat stroke include:

- Dry, hot reddish skin and lack of sweating
- High body temperatures
- Strong, rapid pulse
- Chills
- Confusion
- Slurred speech

How to treat: Heat stroke is a medical emergency.

1. Seek immediately emergency care if you think someone is experiencing heat stroke.
2. Lower the body temperature while waiting for emergency services. Get the person into a cool area. Apply cool water or ice packs to armpits and neck area to lower body temperature.



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3. Treat the symptoms. If the person is experiencing a seizure, keep them safe from injury, If the person vomits, turn them on their side to keep the airway open.

Thursday – 10 Hot Weather Safety Tips

Now that you know what signs to look for indicating a heat related illness, let's share some tips for staying safe in the heat.

1. Stay hydrated.
2. Avoid dehydrating liquids such as coffee, tea, caffeinated soft drinks.
3. Wear protective clothing, light weight and loose fitting helps protect against sun rays.
4. Pace yourself, know your limits.
5. Schedule frequent breaks. Allow time to cool off.
6. Use a damp rag to help stay cool.
7. Avoid getting sun burned. Sun burned skin is harder for the body to self-regulate.
8. Be alert to signs of heat related illness.
9. Avoid direct sun exposure. Work in the shade if possible.
10. Eat smaller meals. Eating large meals in hot conditions can make you feel sluggish and could cause an upset stomach.

Friday – Open Discussion

Now that we've covered the different types of heat related illnesses and tips for staying safe, let's discuss some of your ideas and experiences.

- Have you ever experienced a heat related illness?
- If so, what happened? Did you learn anything from the experience?
- Is your workplace heating up? Are you following the safety tips provided?
- Do you have other tips or ideas for preventing heat related illness in the workplace?