

TOOLBOX TALK 4/60

DATE:

TOPIC: HEAT STRESS

OBJECTIVE: TO ENSURE WORKERS ARE AWARE OF HEAT STRESS AND HOW TO PREVENT HEAT STRESS



Easiest way to conduct and document your safety meetings!

→ Some things to know before you give your talk

- Every year we hear reports of people who become ill or die as a result of summer heat. Heat is an environmental hazard that can cause specific illnesses, decrease productivity, and increase accidents.
- Tolerance for heat varies greatly among people, although no one is entirely immune to heat stress problems.
- The heat illnesses are heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. Dehydration is the culprit because vast quantities of sweat must be produced to cool the body.

→ What are the signs of heat illnesses?

- Heat Cramps: Brief, periodic cramps in the muscles of the arms, legs or abdomen
- Heat Exhaustion: Tiredness, weakness, thirst and dizziness, with occasional headache, nausea, diarrhea and fainting; skin is moist
- Heat Stroke: Confusion, delirium, loss of consciousness, convulsions, coma, and dry skin.

→ What can workers, particularly those who must work outdoors, do to prevent heat illnesses?

- Drink plenty of fluids frequently, especially water. A glass every half hour when temperatures are high is more effective in the prevention of dehydration than larger amounts taken less frequently.
- Wear light weight clothing, and include a shirt which serves as a shield from the sun's rays.
- Get adequate sleep
- Avoid alcohol or stimulants when performing heavy physical activity in hot environments.
- If symptoms of heat exhaustion develop, the worker should report the situation to their supervisor immediately and go to a cooler area of the work site.
- First aid and/or physician care may be necessary
- Heat stroke is an immediate threat to life. Cooling with cold water or even ice must begin at once. At the same time, medical aid should be called.
- The addition of salt to drinking fluids or in tablet form is unnecessary, and in some people may be harmful. Additional salt can be used with foods, according to taste.

