Prevent Heat Illness at Work

Outdoor and indoor heat exposure can be dangerous.

Ways to Protect Yourself and Others

Ease into Work

- Nearly 3 out of 4 fatalities from heat illness happen during the first week of work.
- New and returning workers need to build tolerance to heat (acclimatize) and take frequent breaks.
- Follow the 20% Rule: On the first day, work no more than 20% of the shift’s duration at full intensity in the heat. Increase the duration of time at full intensity by no more than 20% a day until workers are used to working in the heat.

Drink Cool Water

- Drink cool water even if you are not thirsty — at least 1 cup every 20 minutes.

Take Rest Breaks

- Take enough time to recover from heat given the temperature, humidity, and conditions.

Find Shade or a Cool Area

- Take breaks in a designated shady or cool location.

Dress for the Heat

- Wear a hat and light-colored, loose-fitting, and breathable clothing if possible.

Watch Out for Each Other

- Monitor yourself and others for signs of heat illness.

If Wearing a Face Covering

- Change your face covering if it gets wet or soiled. Verbally check on others frequently.

First Aid for Heat Illness

The following are signs of a medical emergency!

- Abnormal thinking or behavior
- Slurred speech
- Seizures
- Loss of consciousness

CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY

COOL THE WORKER RIGHT AWAY WITH WATER OR ICE

STAY WITH THE WORKER UNTIL HELP ARRIVES

Watch for any other signs of heat illness and act quickly. When in doubt, call 911.

If a worker experiences:
- Headache or nausea
- Weakness or dizziness
- Heavy sweating or hot, dry skin
- Elevated body temperature
- Thirst
- Decreased urine output

Take these actions:
- Give water to drink
- Remove unnecessary clothing
- Move to a cooler area
- Cool with water, ice, or a fan
- Do not leave alone
- Seek medical care if needed