

Heat Illness: Recognize It and Act

COMPANY

PROJECT

DATE

PRESENTED BY

Outdoor construction work and heavy lifting can build up body heat faster than you can cool down. New workers and workers returning after time away may need extra time to get used to working in the heat. Heat illness can become serious quickly, so planning, drinking water, and speaking up matter.

Prepare Before Heavy Work

- Check where drinking water, a cool rest area, first aid supplies, and emergency communication are available. Report anything missing before starting heavy outdoor work.
- Talk with the foreman about moving demanding tasks to cooler conditions when possible. Plan rest opportunities and ways to reduce heavy effort, such as sharing loads or using equipment.
- New and returning workers should build up heat exposure and workload gradually. Tell the foreman if you are not yet used to the heat; do not try to prove yourself by pushing through.
- Watch one another during hauling, digging, and other demanding work. Protective clothing can hold heat, so discuss cooling options without removing protection needed for the task.

Drink Water and Watch for Warning Signs

- Drink water regularly instead of waiting until you feel very thirsty. The employer must provide an adequate supply of drinking water; report an empty or inaccessible supply.
- Drinking-water containers must be marked, tightly closable, and equipped with a tap. Do not dip cups into them or use them for anything else.
- Do not drink from outlets marked unsafe. Keep drinking away from toilet rooms and areas exposed to toxic materials, including contaminated work areas.
- Headache, dizziness, nausea, cramps, or unusual weakness can warn of heat illness. Stop work, tell someone, and move to a cooler place for help; do not work through symptoms.

Act Fast When Someone Needs Help

- Confusion, collapse, or seizures are emergency warning signs. Call emergency medical services immediately, and begin cooling the person while help is coming.
- Move the person to a cooler place if safe. Use cool water, wet cloths, and moving air to help cool them, and follow emergency dispatcher instructions.
- Stay with the person. Offer water only if they are fully alert and able to swallow; never force a drink on someone confused or unconscious.
- Know how to describe the work location and guide responders in. Prompt medical attention must be planned before work begins, with required first aid support available.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

While moving materials outdoors, a returning worker becomes dizzy and starts stumbling. They want to finish the load. What would you stop, who would you contact, and how would you help?

Questions for the crew

1. Where can we get drinking water and cool down?
2. Which symptoms mean stop work and get help?
3. How can we ease new or returning workers into hot work?

Plan for heat, watch each other, and act before symptoms get worse.

Sources: OSH Act 5(a)(1), General duty clause; 29 CFR 1926.50, Medical services and first aid; 29 CFR 1926.51, Sanitation

Drafted with AI for review by a competent person. Clever Rook writes from the official regulation text it cites, but it doesn't know your site. Check it against your conditions and your company's safety program before use. Not legal advice.

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REVIEWED BY (COMPETENT PERSON)

REVIEW DATE

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