



SafetyAlert

We're Serious About Safety

Beat the Heat this Summer

Every year, dozens of workers die and thousands more become ill while working in extreme heat or humid conditions. More than 40 percent of heat-related worker deaths occur in the construction industry, but workers in every field are susceptible. There are a range of heat illnesses and they can affect anyone, regardless of age or physical condition. Heat related illnesses include heat rash, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke.

Employer Responsibility to Protect Workers

Under OSHA law, employers are responsible for providing workplaces free of known safety hazards. This includes protecting workers from extreme heat. An employer with workers exposed to high temperatures should establish a complete heat illness prevention program:

- Provide workers with water, rest and shade.
- Allow new or returning workers to gradually increase workloads and take more frequent breaks as they acclimatize, or build a tolerance for working in the heat.
- Plan for emergencies and train workers on prevention.
- Monitor workers for signs of illness.

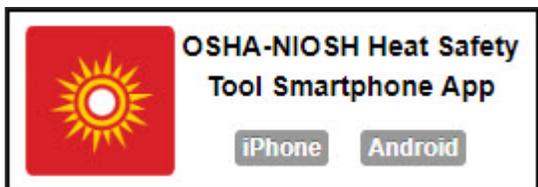


Heat related illnesses are related to a number of risk factors listed below:

- High temperature and humidity
- Direct sun exposure
- Radiant heat exposure (furnaces, boilers, hot pavement, etc.)
- Limited air movement
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Physical exertion
- Personal protective equipment and clothing
- Physical conditions and health problems
- Medications
- Pregnancy
- Advanced Age
- Previous heat-related illnesses

Heat stroke (also known as sun stroke) is a medical emergency and kills more than 10% of victims. Any worker showing any signs of any heat related illness should be moved to a cool area out of the sun and away from the heat. If the person shows any signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke, or if heat cramps persist: CALL 9-1-1 immediately, move the worker out of the sun and heat, and begin first aid measures.

Use the OSHA-NIOSH Heat Safety Tool Smartphone App to learn about signs and symptoms of heat rash, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat stroke, and first aid measures for each.



Try the FREE OSHA-NIOSH smartphone app. For details, visit: <http://www.osha.gov/heat/>



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