



SAFETY MATTERS

RISK MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

IN THIS ISSUE

AUGUST 5, 2022

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HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION

OBJECTIVE To take steps to prevent heat-related illness.

HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS IS PREVENTABLE, especially with management commitment to providing the most effective controls. An effective heat-related illness prevention program is incorporated in a broader safety and health program and aligns with OSHA's Recommended Practices for Safety and Health Programs core elements.

Workers who have not spent time recently in warm or hot environments and/or being physically active will need time to build tolerance (acclimatize) to the heat. During their first few days in warm or hot environments, supervisors should encourage workers to:

- Drink 8 ounces of water every 15 minutes during their shift if they are outdoors
- Do not consume alcohol; avoid coffee and caffeinated drinks
- Take frequent rest breaks in provided shade areas to cool down
- Wear proper clothing. **Remember the 3 Ls (loose-fitting, lightweight, light-colored)**
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat or keep a bandana on hand





Engineering controls such as air conditioning, with cooled air, and increased air flow, leading to increased evaporative cooling, can make the workplace safer. Another option for keeping body temperatures down in warm environments is making changes to workload and schedules. For example, empower supervisors and workers to slow down physical activity. Reduce manual handling speeds or schedule work for the morning or shorter shifts with frequent rest breaks in the shade or at least away from heat sources. Supervisors can encourage workers in warm environments to drink hydrating fluids. At a minimum, all supervisors and workers should receive training about heat-related symptoms and first aid.

HEAT ILLNESS RISKS

Heat-related illnesses can have a substantial cost to workers and employers. Heat stress can cause fine motor performance (like rebar tying or keyboarding) to deteriorate even in acclimatized individuals. Heat illness can contribute to decreased performance, lost productivity due to illness and hospitalization, and possibly death. OSHA encourages water, rest, and shade as prevention as well as treatment for heat-related illness.

HEAT ILLNESS SYMPTOMS

Heat illness includes heat cramps, fainting, heat exhaustion, heatstroke, and may potentially cause serious health problems for an employee. However, heat illness is preventable if you are aware of the symptoms and take early precaution.

What are the early symptoms?

- Fatigue
- Heavy perspiration
- Headache
- Cramps
- Dizziness
- High pulse
- Nausea/vomiting

Be alert and on the lookout for these symptoms in yourself and your coworkers. If you feel any symptoms, tell a coworker and supervisor immediately.



PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Be alert to changes in weather. During a heat wave you are at greater risk for becoming ill and may need to take more breaks or drink more water. Drink enough cool, fresh water. Do not wait until you are thirsty to drink water. During days of expected warm weather, plan work tasks that involve outdoor activity in the earliest part of your day and try to avoid being in direct sunlight when possible.

When temperatures exceed 80 degrees you are on HEATALERT.

This California Schools JPA Safety Matters fact sheet is not intended to be exhaustive. The discussion and best practices suggested herein should not be regarded as legal advice. Readers should pursue legal counsel or contact their insurance providers to gain more exhaustive advice.





SIGN-IN SHEET

HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION

Trainer: _____ Trainer's Signature: _____

Date: _____ Organization: _____ Department: _____

Class Participants:

Name: _____	Signature: _____
Name: _____	Signature: _____
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