

This packet was issued June 1st, 2024

To all construction companies:

Three-digit temperatures are here. We know the heat isn't something new to our contractors, however it's important that your employees know the signs of heat illness and the steps to prevent it on the job site.

Use this guide to hold a tailgate safety meeting with your employees on Heat Illness Prevention. Supervisors should review this safety packet thoroughly.

This packet includes:

- **Prevention Reference Sheet**
- **Heat Illness Prevention Tailgate Topics**
 - **Heat Illness**
 - **Four Elements to Prevent Heat Illness**
 - **Written Procedures for Heat Illness Prevention**
- **Heat Illness Prevention Jobsite Poster (English & Spanish)**
- **Safety Tailgate Sign-in Sheet**

Reference Sheet: Are You Preventing Heat Illness?

Access to Water

Employees need to have access to drinking water that is “fresh, pure, suitably cool, and provided to employees free of charge.” If you’re bringing water to the worksite, be sure to bring enough for each employee to drink 2 gallons per 8-hour shift.

Access to Shade

Shade must be present when the temperature exceeds 80°F or whenever an employee requests shade to be present in temperatures below 80°F.



Preventative Cool-Down Breaks

Preventative cool-down rests must be allowed and encouraged to prevent overheating whenever an employee feels a need to do so. These cool-down rests must be a minimum of 5 minutes and employees taking a preventative cool-down rest must be monitored for symptoms of heat illness.

Emergency Response Procedures

If an employee exhibits signs or reports symptoms of heat illness while taking a preventative cool-down rest or at any point during their shift, the employer shall provide appropriate first aid or emergency response. Ensure all of your employees know what to do in case of an emergency.

Acclimatization of Employees

During a heat wave, all employees should be closely observed. An employee who is new to a high heat area should be closely observed for the first 14 days of their new assignment.

Training

Train employees prior to assigning work that may expose employees to the risk of heat illness.

High Heat Procedures

At 95°F or above, high heat procedures must be followed, including:

- Have pre-shift meetings before work starts
- Effective communication between employees and supervisors
- Observation of employees for alertness and signs/symptoms of heat illness
- Designating one or more employee to call for emergency services if needed
- Reminding employees throughout their shift to drink plenty of water
- Ensuring 10-minute preventative cool-down rest periods every 2 hours.

Reference Sheet: Are You Preventing Heat Illness?

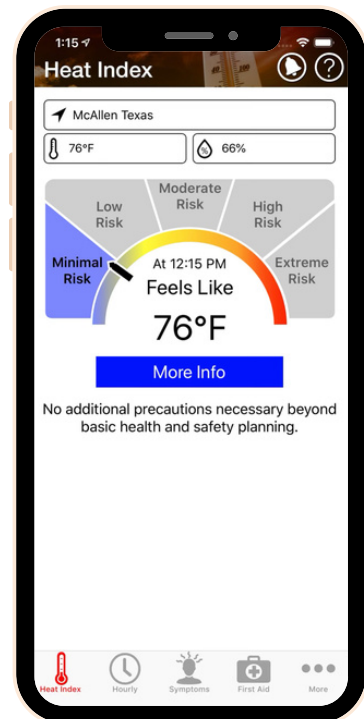
Print and distribute the "Protect Yourself from Heat Illness" pocket guide from CalOSHA for your workers to have on hand.

Employee Corner

Ways to prevent or lessen the effects of Heat Illness:

- Know the symptoms
- Stay alert of the weather
- Drink enough cool, fresh water
- Take rest breaks in the shade
- Wear proper clothing
- Know how to call for emergency services

The OSHA NIOSH Heat Safety Tool phone application can help you determine the forecasted and current heat index for your area. It also is a go-to reference for signs and symptoms and first aid information for heat-related illnesses.



[Click here to watch A&H Safety & Environmental's Heat Illness Prevention YouTube Series!](#)

Tailgate Topic: Heat Illness Prevention

How Heat Illness Occurs

Heat illness is a serious medical condition resulting from the body's inability to cope with a particular heat load. Our bodies need to maintain our internal body temperature within a very narrow range of a few degrees above or below 98.6°F.

The body normally cools itself by sweating, but under some conditions, sweating is not enough.

This is especially true during hot and humid conditions where the sweat does not evaporate as quickly which prevents the body from releasing heat quickly.



Individual Risk Factors

Certain individuals may be at greater risk of suffering from heat illness. The people most at risk include:

1. A person who is already dehydrated.
2. Someone who is not acclimated to the heat.
3. People over the age of 65 and children under the age of 4.
4. People with medical problems and who are taking prescribed drugs.

Drink before you are thirsty and stay away from alcohol & caffeine as much as possible.

3 Types of Heat Related Emergencies

Ensure all employees are aware of your company's procedures for responding to heat-related emergencies!

Heat Cramps: Heat cramps affect people who sweat a lot during strenuous work activity. Sweating makes the body lose salts, fluids and minerals and can lead to muscle cramps when not replenished.

Heat Exhaustion: If you do not take care of the heat cramps and you do not replace those lost fluids and electrolytes, the body starts to sweat more to try to cool off, leading to dehydration and heat exhaustion.

Heat Stroke: The body is no longer able to regulate temperature, causing it to rise rapidly. This can quickly lead to brain damage or death and is a true medical emergency.

Tailgate Topic: 4 Elements of Prevention

Water

There should be access to clean drinking water that is fresh, potable, suitably cool, and provided free of charge. The water should be located close to the worksite.

Always ensure there is enough water for the entire crew during their entire work shift. It is important to drink water frequently and in small quantities.



2 gallons per worker for every 8 hours of work!

Shade

Shade directly blocks sun rays. Shade is inadequate if there is too much heat and will not allow the body to cool down. Shade must be close to worksite when it is 80°F or higher and must cover at least 25% of the crew at one time. Shade can be requested any time during a shift, regardless of temperature.

Written Procedures

Written procedures identify employees responsible for particular tasks, describe procedures for tracking weather, providing sufficient shade and water, etc. It will also include high heat procedures and emergency procedures to follow in those special circumstances.

Training

All employees exposed to heat illness must be trained on:



KCBEX offers training at no cost!

1. Procedures for prevention of illnesses caused by heat
2. The importance of drinking water frequently and in small quantities
3. Different types of illnesses caused by heat and common signs and symptoms
4. Contacts and emergency procedures

[Click here to watch A&H Safety & Environmental's Heat Illness Prevention YouTube Series!](#)



Tailgate Topic: Written Procedures

Purpose of Written Plans

The written plan identifies who is responsible for certain tasks such as providing shade when requested, water replenishment, reminding workers to take breaks and drink water, weather-tracking, and more. Those with responsibilities and roles within plans must be trained and well equipped to carry out those responsibilities.

Providing Water and Shade

The written plan should describe the number and size of water containers and shade structures that will be supplied at the workplace. Pre-planning is crucial to do this and will happen before work starts for each specific work site.

Once the amount of water is determined, there should be procedures in place to make sure there is enough water throughout the entire shift and who will replenish the water when it runs low. This should all be detailed in the written plan.



Heat Wave & High Heat Procedures

Procedures need to be in place to protect employees from overheating when temperatures reach certain thresholds, such as during a heat wave or when the temperature reaches a high of 95°F or more. During these circumstances, certain requirements are triggered such as pre-shift meetings, increased water breaks, reviewing emergency response protocol, etc.

These requirements and procedures will be outlined in the written plan so everyone knows what their role is and how to carry out their duties. During this time, it is also crucial to have policies in place for those who are not acclimatized to the heat.



Emergency Procedures

It is important we know what actions to take in case of an emergency, such as when an employee is suffering from a heat stroke. The written plan will address those responsible for certain tasks like calling 911, providing first aid, flagging down emergency services, etc.

Find more info on written heat illness plans [here](#).