

Heat Illness Prevention

Procedure/Approach

Heat stress happens when your body can no longer control its internal temperature. Heat stress can lead to heat exhaustion and heat stroke. This procedure applies whenever a maintenance employee performs work activities, whether in indoor or outdoor environments, where the heat index equals or exceeds 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

437-002-0156 Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Division

Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion & Actions to Take:

- **Heat Exhaustion Symptoms**
 - Headache or nausea
 - Weakness or dizziness
 - Heavy sweating
 - Hot and dry skin
 - High body temperature
 - Thirst
 - Decreased urine output
 - **Actions for all Symptoms:**
 - Remove unnecessary clothing
 - Cool with water and ice
 - Drink water
 - Move to a cooler area; use a fan
 - Do not leave alone
 - When in doubt, call 911
- **Heat Stroke Symptoms**
 - Abnormal thinking or behavior
 - Slurred speech
 - Seizures
 - Loss of consciousness

- **Actions for all Symptoms:**

- Call 911 immediately
- Cool right away with water/ice
- Remove unnecessary clothing
- Stay with the individual

Prevention of Heat Illness:

- Drink cool water
- Take rest breaks
- Wear light- colored loose-fitting clothing
- Find shade or a cool area
- Check on each other

Access to Shade:

When the heat index equals or exceeds 80 degrees Fahrenheit, one or more shade areas must be accessible to employees. Shade may be provided by natural or artificial means that are not unsafe nor discourage access or use. Employees performing light work are exempt from the provisions for shade when the heat index is less than 90 degrees.

- Shade areas must be open to the air or have a fan ventilating the area.
- Be located as close as practical to the areas where employees are working.

Drinking Water:

Enough drinking water must be available so that each employee may consume 32 ounces per hour. Drinking water must be cool (66 to 77 degrees Fahrenheit) or cold (35 to 65 degrees Fahrenheit)

Acclimatization:

Acclimatization is the beneficial physiological adaptations that occur during repeated exposure to a hot environment. These physiological adaptations include:

- Increased sweating efficiency (earlier onset of sweating, greater sweat production, and reduced electrolyte loss in sweat).
- Stabilization of the circulation.
- The ability to perform work with lower core temperature and heart rate.
- Increased skin blood flow at a given core temperature.

Emergency Medical Plan:

Maintenance employees often work in pairs. When an employee is observed to have symptoms of Heat Exhaustion, the co-worker will follow the actions listed on page 1 and will call the Maintenance Supervisor. When symptoms of heat stroke are observed, 911 is called immediately followed by contacting the Maintenance Supervisor when time allows, while removing unnecessary clothing and cooling the individual with water and ice.

Training and Recordkeeping:

Maintenance staff will be trained annually in Heat Illness Prevention, and new maintenance staff will receive this information during their work orientation. Training records will be submitted to the Human Resources Department and kept on file for one year.