

Heat Stress

OSHA is rolling out their 2012 Heat Illness Prevention Campaign. It will be a nationwide effort to educate workers and employers about the hazards of working outdoors in high heat, and how to prevent heat-related illnesses including heat stroke. OSHA Assistant Secretary Dr.

David Michaels stated “an estimated 4,200 workers suffered heat illnesses last year and as many as 40 died as a result.” Michaels noted there may be many deaths related to heat illnesses where the role of heat is not recognized or identified as a cause of death. He went on to state “we’re getting the information out to really remind employers this is a very important hazard.” A

Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report paper from July 2006 found that 3,442 deaths caused by exposure to extreme heat, or in which extreme heat exposure was a contributing factor, were reported in the United States from 1999 through 2003.

As we enter the warm summer months, here are some tips to prevent heat-related illness when hiking or performing strenuous activities in the hot weather:

TAKE PRECAUTIONS TO AVOID HEAT STRESS

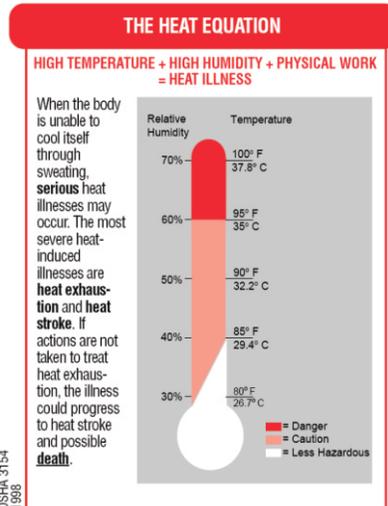
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose clothing.
- Wear a hat outdoors
- Drink Water Early and Often** (If you wait to drink water until you are thirsty, you are already dehydrated.)
- Avoid hot foods, heavy meals, and drinks that contain alcohol or caffeine.
- Don't overexert yourself; walk at a steady pace.
- Take regular breaks in cool places.

TAKE ACTIONS TO AVOID HEAT STRESS

- Heat Stroke is the most serious heat related health problem. Heat stroke occurs when the body's temperature regulating systems fails and the body temperature rises to critical levels. Symptoms include confusion, loss of consciousness, chills, strong rapid pulse, and lack of sweating. Heat stroke is a life

threatening emergency; while first aid measures are being implemented call 911!

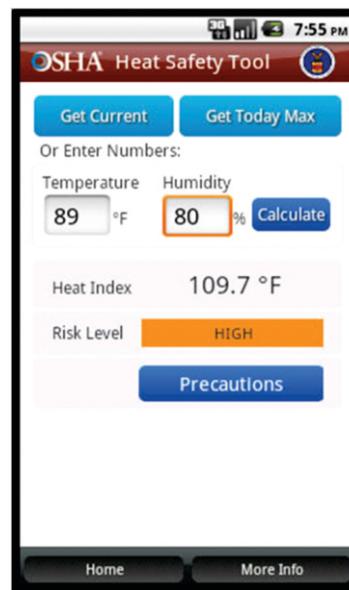
- Heat exhaustion is the most common heat-related ailment. Heat exhaustion happens when a worker sweats a lot and does not drink enough fluids or take in enough salt, or both. The simple way to describe the worker is wet, white and weak. If a worker shows signs of heat exhaustion, they should be taken to a clinic or emergency room immediately to be evaluated.
- Heat cramps are muscle pains usually caused by physical labor in a hot work environment. Heat cramps are caused by loss of body salts and fluids during sweating. If a worker shows signs of heat cramps, they should take a break and drink water.



OSHA'S HEAT SAFETY APP

When you're working in the heat, safety comes first. With the OSHA Heat Safety Tool, you have vital safety information available whenever and wherever you need it — right on your mobile phone (available for Android and iPhone. Blackberry APP coming soon).

The APP allows workers and supervisors to calculate the heat index for their worksite, and, based on the heat index, displays a risk level to outdoor workers. Then, with a simple "click," you can get reminders about the protective measures that should be taken



at that risk level to protect workers from heat-related illness—reminders about drinking enough fluids, scheduling rest breaks, planning for and knowing what to do in an emergency, adjusting work operations, gradually building up the workload for new workers, training on heat illness signs and symptoms, and monitoring each other for signs and symptoms of heat-related illness.

For Additional Information, please contact:

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