

Security SpotLight

An Informational
Guide for
Security Clients

Heat Safety Apps

OSHA and NIOSH have developed an app available through the App Store or on Google Play. The Heat Safety Tool can be used for planning outdoor work activities based on how hot it feels throughout the day. The Red Cross Emergency App is available in English and Spanish and can also be downloaded to mobile devices via the App Store or Google Play.

Online Resources

- www.osha.gov (includes the OSHA Heat Stress Quick Card)
- Red Cross How to Stay Safe series
- The National Weather Service
- www.cdc.gov (includes the print-ready card *Protecting Yourself from Heat Stress*)
- www.medlineplus.gov



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August 2019

Number 185



Staying Safe in the Heat

For those who work or spend a lot of time outdoors, hot weather can pose a threat to personal safety. Heat alone can be threatening, and the addition of what weather forecasters refer to as the “heat index” can make matters worse. The heat index includes all the elements that contribute to heat stress—high temperatures, humidity and direct sun exposure. Certain precautions and safety tips should be followed to guard against the heat, sun exposure and other hazards when working or playing outside in hot weather.

Adequate Hydration Is Essential

According to some studies, a person’s alertness and endurance can be compromised after only one hour of extreme heat exposure.

Experts recommend drinking about five to eight ounces of water every 15 to 20 minutes to stay sufficiently hydrated and maintain a safe core body temperature when working outdoors in elevated temperatures.

After two hours of continued exposure, the effects of heat stress—including cramps, fatigue, decreased strength and reduced coordination—may set in. Maintaining proper hydration by drinking before, during and after exercise is essential to replace body fluids lost to exertion. By the time you feel thirsty, you’re already dehydrated. Water is best for hydration, but sports drinks, which contain electrolytes lost in perspiration, are another option.

Drink cool water which is absorbed by the body more quickly than warm

(continued)

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Responding to an Emergency

Knowing the first signs of heat-related illness, can help you protect yourself and others.

• **Headache, dizziness, or fainting; lethargy and clammy skin; irritability or confusion; and thirst, nausea or vomiting are all signs of heat exhaustion. Intervene to keep the situation from escalating.**

• **Confusion, passing out and seizures as well as an inability to sweat may indicate that a person has heat stroke. This is a serious condition. SEEK HELP IMMEDIATELY.**

Heat-related sickness can be life-threatening. Learn the signs and risks. If you suspect someone is ill from the heat, move the person to a cooler area and contact a supervisor. Do not leave the person alone.

A person who is not alert or seems confused might have heat stroke. Contact a supervisor and CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY. Administer first aid and apply ice as soon as possible.

or very cold fluids. Avoid coffee, tea and alcoholic beverages, which only dehydrate the body further.

Sun Safety

The sun's rays can pose another threat in hot weather. The ultraviolet (UV) radiation in sunlight causes wrinkles, premature aging of the skin and skin cancer. The amount of damage from UV exposure depends on the strength of the light, the length of exposure and whether the skin is protected. Keeping the skin covered helps provide protection from the sun's harmful rays. Wear a wide brimmed hat and tightly-woven clothing—preferably a long-sleeved shirt and long pants. One way to gauge the protection offered by your clothing is to see if you can see your hand through the fabric. If you can, the garment offers minimal protection.

Eye protection is also important. Wear UV-absorbent shades. Some studies have shown a greater incidence of cataracts among those who do not wear sunglasses in bright sunlight. Ensure that all attire is compliant with your company's policies.

UV rays are most intense between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. and are present even on cloudy days. Wearing

sunscreen offers additional protection. Use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30 and limit exposure to the sun.

Excessive Heat Events

U.S. summers commonly produce heat waves—several consecutive days of extremely high temperatures in a given geographic area of the country. Because of the health hazards posed by excessive heat, the National Weather Service (NWS) developed the following heat-related alerts:

- An excessive **HEAT WATCH** is issued when a severe heat event is likely to occur in the next 24 to 72 hours. A watch provides enough notice to prepare for a potential extreme heat event.
- An excessive **HEAT WARNING** or **HEAT ADVISORY** indicates a severe heat event is in progress, imminent, or expected. Either of these is issued within 12 hours of the onset of extremely dangerous heat conditions. A warning is used for conditions posing a threat to life or property. An advisory is issued for less serious conditions that cause significant discomfort or inconvenience, which, if not managed, could lead to a threat to life or property.

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For more information on this and other security related topics, visit the SCIS Safety Awareness Knowledge Center at <http://www.scisusa.com/knowledge-center/>