

## Heat Precautions

**With the heat indexes expected to be 100° to 110° this week, it is time to review precautions again.**

In our June newsletter we related the story of a worker who died of heat stroke on the way to the hospital. This happened in late May, when the weather suddenly turned hot and we had a 90° day. Poor air movement and not drinking enough water contributed to the heat stroke.

Heat and humidity will make conditions potentially dangerous this week, even though people have had a little time to acclimate. There will be little night time relief, so employees may come to work having had little break from heat and humidity. We thought it was worth sending another reminder.

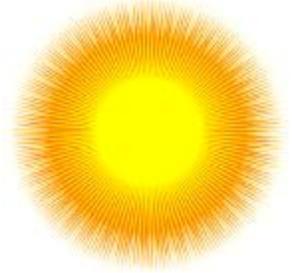
Watch out for your fellow workers. If someone complains of not feeling well, get the person into an air conditioned area to cool down. Know the signs of heat stroke – hot and flushed skin, running a temperature. If you suspect heat stroke, call 9-1-1 and cool the person immediately. Heat stroke requires immediate medical attention.



### To protect against heat:

Drink lots of fluids frequently. Cool water is the best choice.

- Limit caffeine drinks (coffee, Mountain Dew, colas).
- Alternate electrolyte drinks (e.g., Gatorade) with frequent drinks of water (one cup every 20 minutes).
- Never alcohol! It interferes with your body's ability to control your temperature.



Wear loose fitting, light-colored clothing. Evaporation cools you down, so wear cooling towels or damp bandanas. An internet search for “cooling bandanas” will show plenty of reasonable options.

Watch out for your co-workers. If you think they're suffering the effects of heat, get them to take a break and drink cool water.

Pay attention to the weather forecast, to know when conditions could lead to heat stress.

Take into consideration additional heat stresses generated by equipment and/or material (such as work with hot asphalt, working around equipment that generates heat).

Plan work schedules to allow for extra breaks or more frequent, short breaks from severe heat and to encourage increased water consumption.

Allow and expect lowered production.

Personal protective equipment may make the person hotter, so watch for signs of heat stress.

Do the most strenuous work in the morning, when it's cooler.

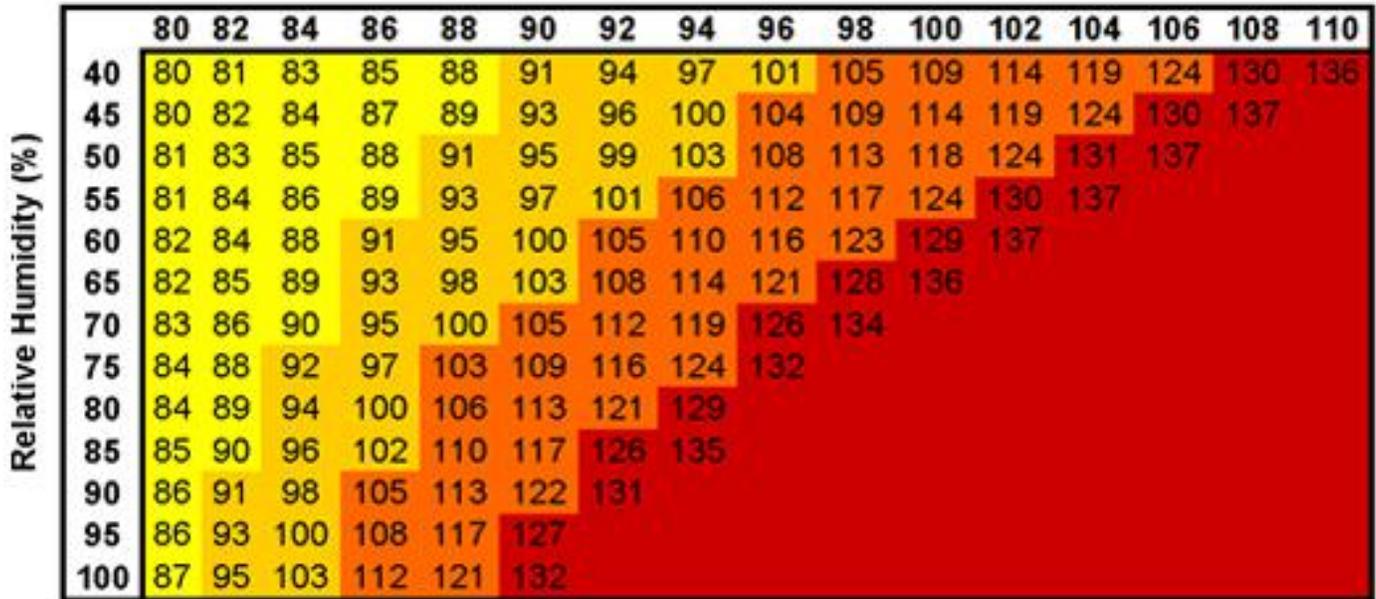
Use fans to increase airflow.

OSHA has some good guidelines that use the National Weather Service Heat Index: see [http://osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/heat\\_index/about.html](http://osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/heat_index/about.html) to track if you're in the danger zone.

## NOAA's National Weather Service

### Heat Index

Temperature (°F)



Likelihood of Heat Disorders with Prolonged Exposure or Strenuous Activity

Caution
  Extreme Caution
  Danger
  Extreme Danger

Heat index	Risk Level	Protective measures
Less than 91°F	Lower (Caution)	Basic heat safety and planning
91°F to 103°F	Moderate	Implement precautions and heighten awareness
103°F to 115°F	High	Additional precautions to protect workers. Set up work/rest regimens to limit exposure.
Greater than 115°F	<u>Very High to Extreme</u>	Take aggressive protective measures. Delay work until cooler weather if possible

Modified from OSHA.gov

The heat index is based on shady, light wind conditions. If workers will be exposed to full sunlight, add 15°F as a rough estimate of the added stress.

**Heat Related Illnesses:**

	Symptoms	First Aid Guide
<b>Heat stroke</b>	<p><b>Very high body temperature</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Fainting, dizziness</li> <li>• Seizures</li> <li>• Lack of sweating</li> <li>• Red, hot, dry skin</li> <li>• Nausea or vomiting</li> <li>• Rapid, shallow breathing</li> <li>• Loss of consciousness</li> </ul>	<p><b>Call 9-1-1. This is a serious medical emergency.</b></p> <p>While waiting for help, try to cool the victim:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wet worker with cool water; apply ice packs, cool compresses, or ice packs to armpits, groin and neck.</li> <li>• Fan air on worker.</li> <li>• Rest in cool area (e.g., vehicle or office with A/C, shade).</li> <li>• Loosen clothing, remove outer clothing.</li> </ul>
<b>Heat exhaustion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cool, moist skin</li> <li>• Heavy sweating</li> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Nausea or vomiting</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Lightheadedness</li> <li>• Weakness</li> <li>• Thirst</li> <li>• Irritability</li> <li>• Fast heart rate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sit or lie down in a cool area (air conditioned vehicle or office, shade).</li> <li>• Drink plenty of water or other cool beverages (limit caffeine).</li> <li>• Use cold compresses/ice packs.</li> <li>• If symptoms worsen or don't improve within an hour, have someone take employee to clinic.</li> </ul>
<b>Heat cramps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muscle spasms</li> <li>• Pain</li> <li>• Usually in abdomen, arms, or legs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rest in a cool area (air conditioned vehicle or office, shade).</li> <li>• Gently stretch and massage the affected muscles</li> <li>• Drink electrolyte replacement (sports) drinks</li> <li>• Wait a few hours before allowing worker to return to strenuous work.</li> <li>• Seek medical attention if cramps don't go away.</li> </ul>
<b>Heat rash</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clusters of red bumps on skin</li> <li>• Often appears on neck, upper chest, folds of skin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep the affected area dry.</li> <li>• Wear clothing that wicks sweat away.</li> <li>• Try to work in a cooler, less humid environment, if and when possible.</li> </ul>

**Look for our regular newsletter in early August.**

**Questions?** Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have safety-related questions or just need more information about something or the services we offer. Please contact us by phone (651-481-9787) or email if you no longer want to receive newsletters.

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