

31. Heat Illness Prevention

This procedure has been developed to assist employees in implementing heat illness prevention procedures to reduce the risk of work related heat illnesses. Activity locations shall be assessed for specific hazards and environmental concerns in order to eliminate or reduce the risk of heat related illness.

NOTE: This procedure provides the minimal steps applicable to most environments and is essential to reducing the incidence of heat related illnesses. In working environments with a higher risk for heat illness (e.g., during a heat wave, or other severe working or environmental conditions), it is the employee with oversight's duty to exercise greater caution and additional protective measures beyond what is listed in this document, as needed to protect employees from a high heat exposure hazard.

31.01. Provision of Potable Drinking Water

31.01.01. All departments shall make available ample portable potable water for consumption by affected employees when the dispensing of potable water is not readily accessible.

31.02. High Heat Procedure

31.02.01. Effective communication by voice, observation, or electronic means will be maintained, so that employees can contact a supervisor when necessary. If the supervisor is unable to be near the employees (to observe them or communicate with them), then an electronic device, such as a cell phone or text messaging device, may be used for this purpose if reception in the area is reliable.

31.02.02. Frequent communication will be maintained with employees working by themselves or in smaller groups (keep tabs on them via phone or two-way radio or "report in" intervals determined by Supervision), to be on the lookout for possible symptoms of heat illness.

31.02.03. Employees will be observed for the signs and symptoms of heat illness. When the supervisor is not available, an alternate responsible person may be assigned, to look for signs and symptoms of heat illness. Such a designated observer will be trained and know what steps to take if heat illness occurs.

31.02.04. Employees are expected to remain hydrated by the available resources necessary throughout the work shift.

31.02.05. When exposed to extreme environmental conditions new employees shall be closely supervised, or assign an experienced co-employee for the first 14 days of the employment. This action will not be necessary if the employee indicates at the time of hire that he or she has been doing similar work for at least 20 of the past 30 days for greater than four hours per day.

31.03. Acclimatization

Acclimatization is the temporary and gradual physiological change in the body that occurs when the environmentally induced heat load to which the body is accustomed is significantly and suddenly exceeded by sudden environmental changes. In more common terms, the body needs time to adapt when temperatures rise suddenly, and an employee risks heat illness by not taking it easy when a heat wave strikes or when starting a new job that exposes the employee to heat to which the employee's body has not yet adjusted.

- 31.03.01. Inadequate acclimatization can be significantly more perilous in conditions of high heat and physical stress.
 - 31.03.02. Employers are responsible for the working conditions of their employees, and they shall act effectively when conditions result in sudden exposure to heat their employees are not used to.
 - 31.03.03. When applicable the weather will be monitored daily. The supervisor will be on the lookout for a sudden heat wave or increase in temperatures to which employees haven't been exposed to for several weeks or longer.
 - 31.03.04. For new employees, the intensity of the work may be lessened during a two-week break-in period (such as scheduling slower paced, less physically demanding work during the hot parts of the day and the heaviest work activities during the cooler parts of the day (early-morning or evening). Steps taken to lessen the intensity of the workload for new employees will be documented.
 - 31.03.05. The supervisor will be extra-vigilant with new employees and stay alert to the presence of heat related symptom
 - 31.03.06. New employees will be assigned an experienced co-employee to watch each other closely for discomfort or symptoms of heat illness.
 - 31.03.07. During a heat wave, all employees shall observe hydration requirements and remain aware of any change in physical condition that may be the symptoms of a heat related illness.
 - 31.03.08. Employees and supervisors will be trained on the importance of acclimatization, how it is developed and how this procedure addresses it.
- 31.04. Attending to an Employee who is exhibiting illness
- 31.04.01. When an employee displays possible signs or symptoms of heat illness, a trained first aid employee or supervisor will check the sick employee and determine whether resting in the shade and drinking cool water will suffice or if medical attention or emergency service providers will need to be called. An employee exhibiting symptoms shall not be left alone as the employee can take a turn for the worse.
 - 31.04.02. When an employee displays possible signs or symptoms of heat illness and no trained first aid employee or supervisor is available at the site, emergency service providers shall be contacted.
 - 31.04.03. Emergency service providers shall be contacted immediately if an employee displays any combination of the following signs or symptoms of heat illness:
 - 31.04.03.01. Loss of consciousness
 - 31.04.03.02. Incoherent speech
 - 31.04.03.03. Convulsions
 - 31.04.03.04. Red and hot face
 - 31.04.03.05. Does not look OK

FP&M Physical Plant Safety Manual - July 2016

31.04.03.06. Does not respond or is not getting better after drinking water and resting in the shade.

31.05. While the ambulance is in route, first aid will be initiated

31.05.01. Cool the employee

31.05.02. Place the employee in the shade

31.05.03. Remove excess layers of clothing

31.05.04. Place ice pack in the armpits and joint area

31.05.05. Fan the employee

31.05.06. Do not let an ill employee leave the site.

31.06. Training

31.06.01. Training will include this written procedure and the steps supervisors will follow when an employee exhibits symptoms consistent with heat illness.